

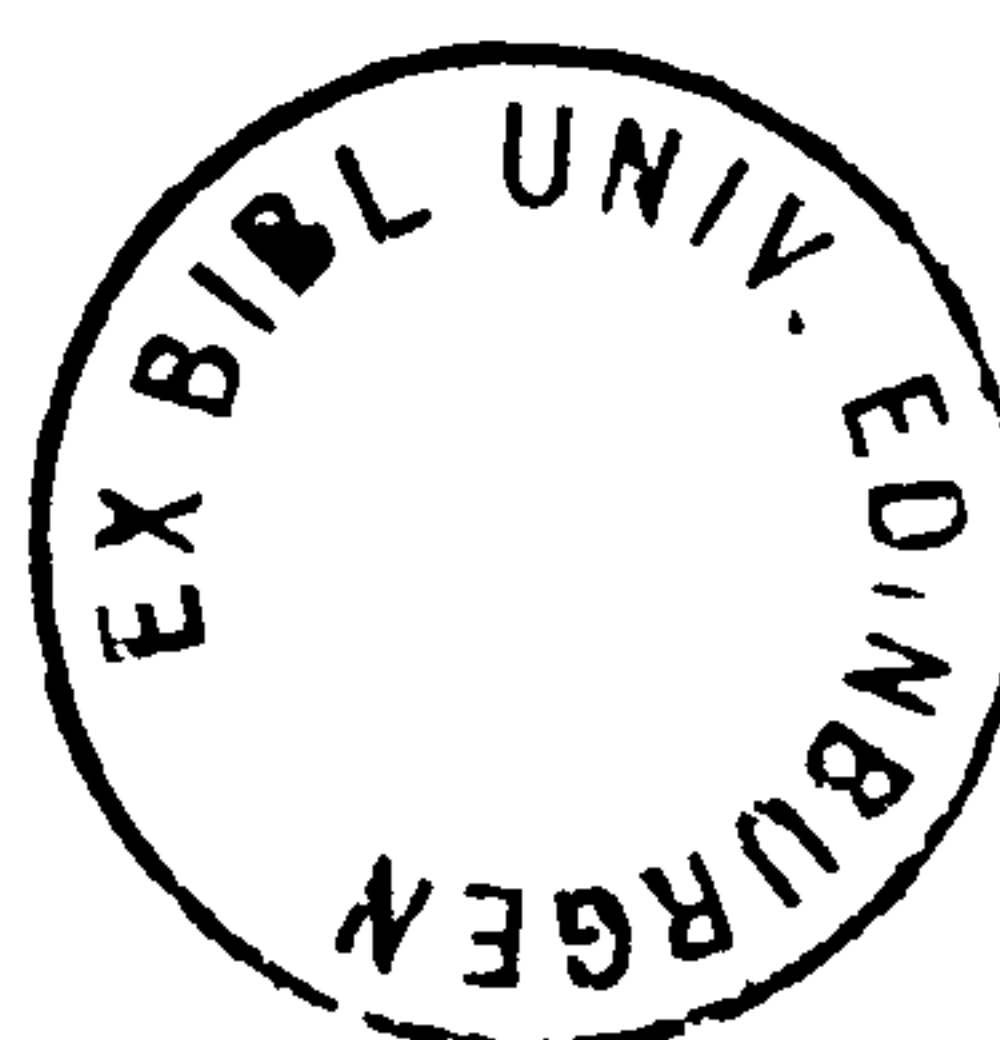
ON BEING ONESELF:  
A COMPARISON OF  
HEIDEGGER AND BUBER ON  
PERSONAL IDENTITY

BY

J.P.L. MUNRO

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE FACULTY OF DIVINITY

1979



## ABSTRACT

The question is posed, what does it mean to be oneself? It is argued that to look for an answer in the psycho-physical characteristics of the individual himself does not take account of man's restless refusal to be content with what he is. The starting point of the inquiry is that an understanding of what makes man himself must take account of the 'beyond' in terms of which he seeks to define himself. It is this preliminary assumption which explains how Heidegger and Buber come to be considered together, for both philosophers share the view that man is an ec-static being, one who 'stands out' from himself in some way. However, it is precisely when Heidegger and Buber are juxtaposed that the problem of the thesis is set, for their views seem mutually exclusive. In Heidegger's understanding a man is only himself when he steps forth towards his own possibility of non-existence. In contrast for Buber it is the relation of love which enables a person to be himself. The purpose of the comparison is to attempt to face the reality of death for each person with its effect on identity, and also the reality of the love of another person freeing one to be oneself.

The argument is presented that man's relation with man as Buber presents it requires a radical reconstruction of Heidegger's analysis of existence. It is suggested that through the reality of love which resists the world 'as it is', including the power of death, the boundaries of existence need to be redefined. If love is accepted as an ontological phenomenon, then its appearance does not seem to be explicable within Heidegger's ontology of Being-towards-death. It is

noted, on the other hand, that if it is possible to build an alternative ontology on love, the final possibility of death cannot be sidestepped. It is here that Heidegger can be used to strengthen Buber's notion of relation, for Buber seems to ignore the finitude of man, and the threat it poses to the 'I-Thou' relation as an ontological category.

In the final section of the thesis, it is argued that the phenomenon of love cannot have its roots in this dying world. It is suggested that an explanation of the reality of love and its power to create personal Being requires an eschatological perspective. Only from such a perspective, with its refusal to accept death as a condition of man being himself, can an alternative ontology to Heidegger's be found.

The conclusion reached is that the concept of God is implicit in the view of selfhood developed in the thesis. In accordance with that conclusion, in the final chapter some theological implications of a relational view of the self are outlined. In particular, the question is asked whether Persons-in-Trinity can be viewed as the ultimate resource for personhood. Finally, requirements for a Christological anthropology consistent with a relational selfhood, are considered.

#### DECLARATION

No portion of this work has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institution of learning.



#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my debt to Mrs. Elizabeth Templeton, and Fr. Noel O'Donoghue, who not only have supervised my research, but have given their personal support and encouragement over several years.

My thanks are also due to other members of the Faculty of Divinity, to the library staff of New College for their invaluable help, and to my fellow students who were continually expected to listen to thoughts on Heidegger and Buber. In particular I mention Andrew Purves whose theological struggles as a postgraduate student reflected my own, and with whom I learnt much.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to Susie Whitelam for her patience and dedication to accuracy in typing the manuscript, and finally to my wife, Pat, whose love and longsuffering support has made this thesis possible.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	v
FRONTISPIECE . . . . .	viii
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Chapter	
I. HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY . . . . .	8
<u>Method</u> . . . . .	8
<u>Existence and Mineness</u> . . . . .	18
<u>Mineness</u> . . . . .	25
<u>Individualised Existence</u> . . . . .	27
<u>Isolation in a World</u> . . . . .	32
<u>The Function of Anxiety</u> . . . . .	36
<u>Isolation in the Presence of Others</u> . . . . .	40
<u>Summary</u> . . . . .	47
II. DEATH AND THE FREEDOM TO BE ONESELF . . . . .	48
<u>'Care' and Wholeness</u> . . . . .	57
<u>Death and the Identity of Dasein</u> . . . . .	60
<u>An Existential Interpretation of Death</u> . . . . .	67
<u>Advancing Towards Death</u> . . . . .	70
<u>Freedom and Death</u> . . . . .	72
<u>The Argument Thus Far</u> . . . . .	73
<u>Dasein and the Current Situation</u> . . . . .	75
<u>Temporality and the Wholeness of Dasein</u> . . . . .	82
<u>Summary</u> . . . . .	86
<u>Criticism</u> . . . . .	87
III. MARTIN BUBER'S CONCEPT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY . . . . .	99
<u>The Homelessness of Man</u> . . . . .	102
<u>The Sphere of Between</u> . . . . .	105
<u>The 'Between' and the 'Eternal Thou'</u> . . . . .	110

	<u>The Connection between I-Thou and I-It</u>	113
	<u>The World of Freedom and of Causality</u>	116
	<u>Distance and Relation</u>	121
	<u>Personal Presence and the Eternal Thou</u>	125
	<u>The Eschatological Presence of the Eternal Thou</u>	128
	<u>Summary and Criticism</u>	136
IV.	PERSONS-IN-RELATION	144
	<u>The Meaning of the Self</u>	149
	<u>Concepts of the Self</u>	151
	1) The absolute universal self	152
	2) The transcendental-constituting self	152
	3) The no-self	154
	4) The natural-organic self	155
	5) The self-in-relation	157
	<u>Particularity in Communion: an ontology of Presence</u>	165
	<u>Persons as Bodies: the Paradox of Presence-in-Absence</u>	170
	<u>Conclusion: Is the Concept of God implicit in Personhood?</u>	176
V.	THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PERSONHOOD	183
	<u>A Reconciliation of Love and Death?</u>	184
	<u>Particularity without Individuality: the Doctrine of the Trinity.</u>	194
	<u>Embodiedness without Individuality: the Doctrine of the Incarnation</u>	206
	<u>Outstanding Questions relating to a Christological Anthropology</u>	210
	1) The relation of person to 'nature'	210
	2) Christ as Representative man	211
	3) The particularity of Jesus Christ in the Church	212
	4) Freedom anticipated in the sacraments.	215
	CONCLUSION: ESCHATOLOGICAL EXISTENCE	218
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	226

... For how can we reject  
The long last look on the ever-dying face  
Turned backward from the other side of time?  
And how offend the dead and shame the living  
By these despairs? And how refrain from love?  
This is a difficult country, and our home.

Edwin Muir

"The Difficult Land" in  
Collected Poems (London:  
Faber and Faber, 1960), p. 238.



## INTRODUCTION

Thirty spokes unite in one nave,  
And because of the part where nothing exists we have  
the use of a carriage wheel.  
Clay is moulded into vessels,  
And because of the space where nothing exists we are able  
to use them as vessels.  
Doors and windows are cut in the walls of a house,  
And because they are empty spaces, we are able  
to use them.  
Therefore on the one hand we have the benefit of existence,  
and on the other of non-existence.<sup>1</sup>

In Antoine de Saint-Exupery's, The Little Prince, the story is told of a space-traveller, who is overcome with sadness on encountering an earthly garden full of roses. On his home planet, the Little Prince had cared for one rose which he believed to be unique in the whole universe, and here were five thousand of them all alike in a single garden. As he was concluding that all he had loved was a common rose, a wise fox appeared, and taught him that his rose was unique, not through any intrinsic properties it possessed, but because he had loved it. To the other roses he said,

You are beautiful, but you are empty. One could not die for you. To be sure, an ordinary passer-by would think that my rose looked just like you--the rose that belongs to me. But in herself alone she is more important than all the hundreds of you other roses .... because she is my rose.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>The thoughts of Lao-Tse, quoted in a discussion on Heidegger in William Barrett's Irrational Man, A Study in Existential Philosophy (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1962), p. 234.

<sup>2</sup>Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince, translated by Katherine Woods (Puffin Books, 1962), p. 83.

The purpose of this inquiry may be stated as an examination in depth of one approach to the question of how one is identified uniquely as oneself. The quotations chosen above have something in common, and enable that approach to be made clear, for both quotations, in significantly different ways, direct attention away from characteristics of personality. In doing that, they introduce the first assumption to be made; that to look for the centre of personal identity somewhere other than in observable characteristics of personality is at least a conceivable enterprise.

It is this preliminary assumption which explains how Heidegger and Buber come to be considered together, for both philosophers share the view that one is uniquely oneself when one 'stands out' from oneself in some way. It is this capacity to be ec-static which, for them, distinguishes man from other beings who can be identified as themselves only by their particular characteristics. For both Heidegger and Buber, one is uniquely oneself in relation to that which lies beyond one's bodily boundaries.

However, it is precisely when Heidegger and Buber are juxtaposed that the problem of this thesis is set, a problem which is expressed in placing together the initial quotations (on page 1). In the first, it is the emptiness of non-existence which is exalted as that which complements existence and integrates it into a functioning whole. In opposition to this is ~~another view in which~~ one's identity is created by the love of another. The problem is that each view seems to exclude the other. In Heidegger's understanding, a man is only himself when he steps forth towards his own possibility of non-existence. Death, as that possibility which, of all possibilities is his alone, has an integrating function in bringing him to be himself. The fact that each



individual must die is constitutive of authentic selfhood. It is man's relation to time which enables him to be himself. In contrast, Buber talks of the meeting in which there is the encounter of 'I' and 'Thou' which enables a person to be himself.

Death and love; are they mutually exclusive, or is a synthesis possible? The question will be posed to Heidegger: Is his existential analysis adequate? Does he take sufficient account of the realm of the interhuman (Zwischenmenschlichen) which Buber makes the foundation of his anthropology and ontology? If it is shown that his analysis is partial, can we simply add an analysis of interpersonal relations to give a whole view of man's existence, or are the two ways of viewing man incompatible?

It seems to me that these questions are tested by one fact in particular, the fact that I will die. As will be made clear, Heidegger's definition of existence as "towards death" makes it impossible for him to give the existence of his fellow men any ontological status. He may recognise the everyday reality of man in relation to others, but he cannot agree that authentic existence is ultimately interpersonal. Buber, on the other hand, does not seem to face up to the reality of death, and the threat which it poses to any talk of love as the ultimate category for man's existence.

The purpose of this comparison of Buber and Heidegger is to attempt to face both the reality of death for each one of us with its effect on who we are, and also the reality of the other person who in the act of love can free one to be oneself. The argument will be that man's relation with man as Buber presents it requires a radical reconstruction of Heidegger's analysis of man's existence.

As the discussion progresses it will be shown that far more

is at stake here than alternative views of selfhood. We are not embarking on a study of selfhood as an isolated phenomenon, in abstraction from the world. Indeed it is assumed from the beginning that such an isolation cannot lead to a full understanding of personal identity. The significance of the difference between Heidegger and Buber on the question of personal identity lies in the alternative views of reality which are linked inseparably with their views of selfhood. Both philosophers see man in a world that is bound up with him. The world does not exist for them as a detached reality over against a worldless subject; the world and man are caught up in each other, so that any conclusions concerning personal identity have implications for man's world, and vice versa.

To anticipate something of the argument, it will be suggested that through the reality of love, which resists the world as it is, and resists even the power of death, the boundaries of existence need to be redefined. If love is accepted as an ontological phenomenon, then its appearance must be explained, and this seems impossible to do in Heidegger's ontology of Being-towards-death. We are forced to look beyond the world in some sense for an explanation, and once we do that, Being-towards-death must be redefined. This does not mean that Heidegger's analysis will simply be discarded, for he accurately portrays an ontology of this world. If death is the final possibility, to live authentically is to face resolutely that non-relational, individualising possibility. If it is possible to build an alternative ontology on love, that final possibility of death must not be sidestepped. It is here that Heidegger can be used to strengthen Buber's notion of relation, for Buber seems to ignore the finitude of man, and the threat it poses to the I-Thou relation as an ontological category.

In the final section of the thesis, it will be argued that the phenomenon of love cannot have its roots in this dying world. It will be suggested that an explanation of the reality of love and its power to create personal Being requires an eschatological perspective. Only from such a perspective, with its refusal to accept death as a condition of man being himself, can an alternative ontology to Heidegger's be found.

The conclusion reached is that the concept of God is implicit in the view of selfhood developed in this thesis, though by no means in all concepts of the self. In accordance with that conclusion, in Chapter V some theological implications of a relational view of the self are outlined. The purpose of these comments is not to provide a prescriptive solution to the problems of existence explored, but rather to show that if the concept of God is relevant to a relational selfhood, it is relevant only as its ontological ground and not as an appendix to it.

Before beginning the task of analysing Heidegger's and Buber's concepts of personal identity, an objection to the whole venture must be considered. It is suggested that Buber and Heidegger cannot be compared since their intentions are so radically opposed. Thus Maurice Friedman:

The basic issue between Heidegger and Buber is whether the reality of the self, and of ontology, is found in the ground of the self and of its own "mature resolute existence" or whether it is found "between man and man". If the former, one can make use of existential categories of analysis since they tell us something of a self that may be regarded in itself; if the latter, the self must be understood in the dialogue with other selves, in the between, and never as an ontological entity understandable prior to its interhuman relations. The issue between the two philosophers, therefore, is a much more radical one than the question of whether one may add the 'I-Thou'



relationship as one further existential category to<sup>1</sup>  
those with which Heidegger has already provided us.

The point is made by Friedman in a discussion on psychotherapy, and raises the question whether in that context there can be any synthesis of the two views, since from Buber's standpoint an ontological analysis of dialogue is no substitute for dialogue itself.<sup>2</sup> However true it may be that therapy can only happen as a result of the direct encounter of therapist and patient, this criticism need not affect the task of this inquiry. Buber himself, in his writings on the I-Thou relation, necessarily steps back from dialogue in order to reflect on it. It is perfectly legitimate to compare the alternative views of what enables man to be himself.

A more serious ground for criticising the direct comparison of the two philosophers is that Heidegger is engaged in a study of the meaning of Being as such, whereas Buber is concerned with philosophical anthropology.<sup>3</sup> In fact, as will be made clear in the following pages, the two pursuits are not mutually exclusive. In Being and Time, Heidegger finds the way to his goal through an analysis of man's existence. Buber, although his interest is in the relation of one man to another, develops an ontology in the process. The difference between the two is one of emphasis rather than of subject matter.

---

<sup>1</sup>Maurice Friedman, The Worlds of Existentialism, A Critical Reader (University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 515.

<sup>2</sup>The criticism is directed specifically towards the work of Ludwig Binswanger who in his theory of psychiatry known as Dasein analysis, has attempted to add to Heidegger's analysis of existence "for the sake of myself", the dimension of love. See Being-in-the-world. Selected papers of Ludwig Binswanger, edited by Jacob Needman (New York: Basic Books, 1963), also Friedman, op. cit. pp. 414ff; p. 514.

<sup>3</sup>This judgement is made by William Barrett, Irrational Man, p. 236.

This study is brought into focus by two books, Being and Time, and I and Thou. I make no apology for limiting the analysis of Heidegger's work in this way. Some commentators make much of Heidegger's so-called Reversal, and the suggested impossibility of considering Being and Time except in the light of his later writings. However, the purpose of this study is not to comment on the philosophy of Heidegger as a whole, but specifically on how he understands selfhood in relation to death. This question is dealt with almost exclusively in Being and Time.

## CHAPTER I

### HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

#### Introductory Remarks on Method

In a study which attempts to find the focus of personal identity beyond the boundaries of the individual, the philosophy of Martin Heidegger cannot be ignored. The analysis of man's existence in his major work, Being and Time,<sup>1</sup> rests on the assumption that man is a being with the capacity to stand ahead of himself. Indeed, in his view, it is only because man is characterised as an ec-static being that he is enabled to be a self at all. For that reason alone Heidegger's work could not be ignored in this thesis. However, there is a more profound reason than simply that Heidegger's thought is an important contribution to the problem under consideration. His analysis of the Being of man is claimed to be exhaustive, and seems to preclude other interpretations of man as an ec-static being, in particular the view represented here by Martin Buber, that it is only when man stands out from himself to other persons that he can be himself. By incorporating the dimension of the future into his definition of personal identity, Heidegger forestalls any talk of an identity which is timeless. In the light of his work, one cannot say, "Death will mean the end of me, but that does not affect my identity now". As will be made clear in the following pages, because the "end", or the future, is a constitutive

---

<sup>1</sup>Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. Macquarrie and Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973). Henceforth referred to as BT. The original German annotation is given after the English.



feature of identity "now", the character of the future is all important to the question of who I am.

It is this emphasis on the future which provides a critical tool to be applied to Buber's concept of personal identity; for as will be shown later, the interhuman nature of selfhood which he proposes grants little significance to man's character as a being who exists in time and is limited by it. However, before Buber can even be considered in the same context as Heidegger, it must be shown that there is reason to go beyond Heidegger's analysis of man's existence. The way through to considering Buber's work as more than a description of the ways people relate to each other, depends on showing that Heidegger's analysis is inadequate. It is not sufficient simply to show that it is incomplete as an ontological analysis, and that the addition of Buber's relational concept could fill the gaps. It must be shown to be inadequate in its very foundation, i.e. that man is not himself as "Being-towards-death", to use Heidegger's phrase. The task of chapters one and two is to consider Heidegger's arguments in Being and Time, questioning whether he does succeed in presenting an exhaustive analysis of man's Being. If it were to be concluded that his project is successful, this study would end at that point, for the ground of comparison between Heidegger and Buber would be removed. Buber's relational concept of "I and Thou" could then be no more than a piece of philosophical anthropology, for the analysis of what man is in his Being would be completed by Heidegger. The tension which creates the argument of this thesis is only maintained if each philosopher can show that his concept of personal identity is related to the nature of Reality itself.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse Heidegger's understanding of the "ground" of personal identity. In using the word "ground"

it is implied that the primary concern is not with the ways in which individual human beings have in fact seen themselves as "selves" or how they have marked themselves off as distinct from others. The question being asked is rather, what is it about being human which enables us to see ourselves as 'selves' at all? Only then can consideration be given to the problem of what enables that selfhood to be manifested.

Before examining these questions, their relation to Heidegger's concern in Being and Time must be shown, for the connection is not immediately obvious. The purpose of Being and Time as stated in the preface, and frequently throughout the book, is "to raise anew the question of the meaning of Being", or more in the spirit if not the letter of Being and Time, "the question of what it means to be".<sup>1</sup> This concern, according to Heidegger, has been lost in the pre-occupation with 'beings' (Seindes). So much attention has been given to the inter-relationships of 'beings' in the midst of other 'beings', that the question of what it is to be at all, has been overlooked. In that case, it might seem inappropriate to turn to Being and Time with questions about the meaning of selfhood. What other activity could be more inclined to turn the inquirer away from the meaning of Being as a whole towards an introspective examination of particular 'beings'?

In fact, for Heidegger, there is a close connection between the analysis of one particular being, man, and the question of the meaning of Being itself. The connection lies in the fact that the

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 19/1. Macquarrie's translation of "die Frage nach dem Sinn vom Sein", is given first. Although Sein in this context is a substantive, it is suggested by one commentator that it should be understood as the infinitive 'to be'. This interpretation certainly carries an existential as opposed to substantial meaning, which is Heidegger's intention throughout Being and Time. See Michael Gelven, A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time (New York: Harper, 1970), p. 18.

question of the meaning of Being cannot be asked in isolation from particular beings, but must be approached through them. The inquiry is about 'Being', "that which determines entities as entities ... and 'is' not itself an entity", but the investigation can proceed only via 'entities'.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger goes on to argue that one particular being has priority over all others when it is a question of the meaning of Being, and that is the inquirer himself. As a preliminary step towards an understanding of the meaning of Being the inquirer must examine the meaning of himself. Far from being an introspective inquiry, this examination is intended to lead beyond the questioner to Being as the ground of his identity.<sup>2</sup> Heidegger's reason for claiming priority for the inquirer is that, in each case the very question of the meaning of Being belongs to his Being.<sup>3</sup> The capacity to ask about the meaning of Being is not something external to the inquirer, or an ability which the inquirer has as a possession, but is that which makes man the being that he is. For such a being whose way of Being is constituted by his inquiry into the meaning of Being, Heidegger reserves the word, Dasein.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 26/6.

<sup>2</sup>The purpose of Being and Time is clarified by a footnote in Heidegger's The Essence of Reasons, transl. by Terence Malick (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 97. This text, published only one year after BT, is in some ways a commentary on some concepts of the earlier work. Here Heidegger explains that BT has "as its task nothing more than a concrete, revealing sketch (Entwurf) of transcendence". In order to counter the suggestion that such an emphasis means that BT works from an "anthropocentric standpoint", he explains that "by elaborating the structure of transcendence of Dasein, 'man' comes into the 'centre' of the picture, so that his nothingness within the totality of Being can and must become a problem of first priority". Thus the analysis of transcendence is not an end in itself but is to lead to the horizon of man's Being.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 27/7.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. The term will be left untranslated as it has become a



Dasein denotes a being which stands apart from other beings in that what it is, is defined only in relation to Being. This means that, to discover how Dasein is in each case itself, the inquiry must also be directed towards Being in relation to which Dasein is itself.

As Heidegger himself admits, a circularity pervades this project. An analysis of Dasein with its close relation to Being requires some pre-understanding of the meaning of Being, but it is precisely that understanding which the project is designed to attain.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger does not wish to deny the circularity, but encourages us to "leap into the circle primordially and wholly, so that even at the start of the analysis of Dasein we make sure we have a full view of Dasein's circular Being".<sup>2</sup> In his later writings Heidegger enters the circle grasping the question of the meaning of Being directly, but in Being and Time his approach is by way of Dasein, which is itself in relating to Being. The preliminary task in the question of the meaning of Being is therefore to make Dasein "transparent in his own being".<sup>3</sup> It will be made clear that in this existential approach the concept of personal identity is crucial. The thread of Jemeinigkeit (Mineness) runs through the entire work, being the condition for the possibility of authentic and inauthentic existence. Heidegger's argument is that if Dasein were not characterised by 'mineness' or selfhood, there would be no possibility of existing authentically or inauthentically. It is a major task of Being and Time to explore the

---

technical term as it stands. It should be emphasised that Heidegger uses the term not as a pseudonym for "individual" or "man" but solely as an ontological term. By using 'Dasein' he avoids any suggestion of a subject who is 'there'. 'Dasein' is simply 'Being-there'.

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp. 27/7; 362/315.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 363/316.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 27/7. This indeed is the whole project of BT, and Heidegger never succeeded in moving to the next stage.

ground of selfhood, which can then give access to the question of the meaning of Being.

Before considering Heidegger's way of analysing man existentially, an indication will be given of the approaches he is rejecting. He sets his analysis in opposition to a 'substantialist' ontology which, whether intentionally or not, identifies the individual by his location as an object in space and time. Since everyday language identifying the individual tends to support this position, Heidegger is careful to avoid the use of terms such as "the ego cogito of Descartes, the subject, the 'I', reason, spirit, person", which have been used to denote the selfhood of the inquirer, but have disguised the fact that the Being of the inquirer remains unquestioned.<sup>1</sup> Names such as 'subject' suggest some 'thing' which is there, and Heidegger's intention is to question the substantial nature of the self so that there can be an openness to what underlies the existing 'self'. He argues that unless the notion of 'subject' is explicitly challenged, there is a tendency to slip into a 'substantialist' ontology so that the Being of the subject is conceived by analogy with the Being of a 'thing'.<sup>2</sup> Descartes in particular is seen as guilty since with the cogito sum he claimed to put philosophy on a new firm footing but totally neglected to ask concerning "the meaning of the Being of the sum".<sup>3</sup> Heidegger discusses Descartes in some detail, and it will help prepare the ground for the position he is advocating if his criticisms of Descartes are isolated.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp. 44/22; 72/46.

<sup>2</sup>  
Ibid., pp. 72/46f.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 46/24.

<sup>4</sup>See in particular BT, pp. 43/22ff.; 123/90ff. The unpublished

1) According to Heidegger, Descartes understands man as an object within a world of objects, and his Being is defined in relation to other objects. No question is asked concerning the 'ground' of that world of objects. In Heidegger's terminology, the worldhood of the world remains unquestioned. For Descartes, 'world' is equivalent to "all that is", i.e. a whole which embraces but no further defines the entire sum of what is.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, Heidegger argues that the position of man as an object in a world of objects is irrelevant to the question of his Being. He does not deny that man can be viewed as an object, but by using the term Dasein, which is not applicable to man as an object, he concentrates solely on his character as a being who stands out from objects in the world. Heidegger certainly wishes to consider man in relation to the world, but not as a part is related to a whole. World is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself, in a way which will be made clear later in the chapter.<sup>2</sup>

2) In Descartes' ontology, the Being of man is taken "in the same sense as the Being of the res extensa, viz. as substance".<sup>3</sup> When the meaning of 'substance' is taken further it becomes clear why Heidegger objects so strongly to the view that the self is a res cogitans. He quotes Descartes' definition of substance:

By substance we can understand nothing else than an

---

Part II of BT was to have included a section analysing the ontological foundation of the cogito sum. It should be noted that there is no intention here to discuss the validity of Heidegger's criticism of Descartes, but simply to present his interpretation.

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp. 128/95; 130/98. The point is expanded in an extended treatment of the concept of world in Essence of Reasons, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 92/64. See below, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 131/98.



entity which is in such a way that it needs no other entity in order to be.<sup>1</sup>

Descartes equates substantiality and self subsistence. That which makes each substance be itself is found within itself. Applied to the Being of man, such an ontology implies that nothing beyond what is substantially present can affect his Being. The result is to encapsulate man's Being, to confine him within the boundaries of the 'given', and to deny the ontological significance of his capacity to relate to what is beyond him. It is this self-contained character of 'substance' which Heidegger finds so inappropriate for the Being of man. However this does not mean that he rejects the concept of self-subsistence altogether. The point is simply that Dasein's self-subsistence rests on a different basis from any other being:

Its 'subsistence' is not based on the substantiality of a substance but on the 'Self-subsistence' of the existing self, whose Being has been conceived as care.<sup>2</sup>

It is the existing Dasein, Dasein which 'stands-out' from itself which is self-subsistent. In other words, Heidegger selects the capacity to stand-out or ex-sist, the very capacity that was denied by a substantialist ontology, as the condition of self-subsistence. Later the criticism will be developed that Heidegger's notion of the self-subsistence of the ex-sisting Dasein also leads to the encapsulation of man's Being, and therefore has the same result as the substantialist ontology he rejects.

3) For Descartes, man's Being is unchangingly present.<sup>3</sup> The

---

<sup>1</sup>"Per substantiam nihil aliud intelligere possumus, quam rem quae ita existit, ut nulla alia re indigeat ad existendum." Descartes, Principia Philosophiae Part I, para. 51. Heidegger's translation is given here. BT, p. 125/92.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 351/303.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 125/92ff.

Being of an entity is found by defining its attributes, amongst which for each instance there is "pre-eminently one property which constitutes its nature and essence, to which all the rest are referred".<sup>1</sup> For the res corporea this property, in Descartes' view, is extensa, or length, breadth and height. As Heidegger comments, "Extension is a state-of-Being, constitutive for the entity we are talking about".<sup>2</sup> It is that which remains constant though all other attributes may change. In other words, that which remains constant makes that being what it is. According to Heidegger, in Descartes' ontology this assumption is also applied to the Being of man. Dasein is defined in a way which compels us to accept that it is. The Being of man is defined by its compelling presence, which leads us to overlook its contingency, the fact that it might not, and will not exist. The same contingency is clouded over by the insistence that the Being of man is unchangingly constant, that Dasein is now in essence what it has always been and always will be.

The conclusion from these points is this. Heidegger is claiming that an understanding of Dasein, and hence of the meaning of Being, requires a radical departure from the common sense starting point, namely the man who appears to our senses. It means turning away from the man who can be described, defined and circumscribed as an object can be defined. In a sense it means declaring that man is indefinable, if by that it is meant that his essential Being can be captured in a definition that remains unchanged through time.

The problem then is that if man's Being cannot be understood by considering man as he appears, how can he be approached at all?

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 123/90 quoting Descartes' Principia Philosophiae Part I, para. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Three ways have been indicated above which show how man can break through the confines of his present appearance. 1) Dasein is to be viewed in a close relation to the world; 2) his Being is not substantial but existential; and 3) his Being is related to time. By analysing these horizons of man's Being, his worldhood, his existentiality and his temporality, Heidegger leads us towards an understanding of selfhood. By investigating the horizons, what is near at hand is brought into focus in a way which would not be possible by looking directly at man as he appears to us. The purpose of the rest of this chapter is to reveal the nature of selfhood which emerges from viewing man as a being who ex-sists, who stands out from himself.

It will be argued that Being and Time is misinterpreted unless it is seen as a defence of a radically individualised selfhood, i.e. the character of man's existence is such that he is only himself in relation to his own existence. In his Being he is isolated from others. This interpretation is opposed to that of several commentators. Macquarrie, for example, concludes:

Heidegger's individualism appears to me to be accidental rather than essential to his philosophy which clearly recognises 'Being-with-Others' as a necessary way of being of the individual, a basic existential.<sup>1</sup>

It will be shown in the following pages that Heidegger's undoubted emphasis on 'Being-with-others' in no way detracts from the view that when Dasein is 'authentic', there is radical isolation. For Heidegger, individualism is by no means accidental to his concept of the 'owned' or 'authentic' self. Indeed, at one point he describes his standpoint as existential solipsism, but goes on to say that, far from divorcing an isolated subject

---

<sup>1</sup>John Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology (Middlesex: Pelican Books, 1973), p. 85.



from the world, what it does is "precisely to bring Dasein face to face with its world as world, and thus bring it face to face with itself as Being-in-the-world".<sup>1</sup> The exact nature of Heidegger's notion of individualised existence, and of the way Dasein exists in relation to others and to the world will be explored in what follows.

### Existence and Mineness

The two concepts of 'existence' (Existenz) and 'mineness' (Jemeinigkeit) form the starting point for the analysis of Dasein's way of Being, and their meaning is unfolded throughout Being and Time.<sup>2</sup> 'Existenz' is the term reserved uniquely for Dasein, in distinction from Existencia which is used for any other being. Such beings are classified by Heidegger as 'present-at-hand' (vorhanden) or ready-to-hand (zuhanden),<sup>3</sup> and they are distinguished from Dasein in that they are incapable of asking questions about their Being.

For Heidegger, "the essence of Dasein lies in its existence".<sup>4</sup> This linking of 'essence' and 'existence' is crucial and must be explored in some detail. It is clear that, whatever Heidegger means here, the way through to an awareness of the 'essence' of Dasein lies in an examination of 'existence'. First, the approaches which Heidegger rejects will be outlined.

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 233/188.

<sup>2</sup>The terms are introduced in BT, p. 67/42.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. For definitions of vorhanden and zuhanden, see BT, p. 68/42 and p. 98/69. Heidegger's criticism of a substantialist ontology, as has been noted already is that no distinction is made between the Being of things 'present-at-hand', and the Being of man.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 67/42.

1) He rejects the notion that what man 'is' he has always been; i.e. that he 'has' an essence which precedes existence. It has already been noted in the discussion on Descartes that to define the essence of man as that which persists unchanged through time is to circumscribe and limit his Being in the manner of things 'present-at-hand'.

2) He rejects the view that Existence precedes essence, in Sartre's sense. In his Brief über den Humanismus, written twenty years later than Being and Time, Heidegger writes:

Sartre states the axiom of existentialism in the following manner: "Existence precedes Essence". He uses the terms existentia and essentia here in the sense of metaphysics, which has maintained since Plato that essentia precedes existentia. Sartre turns this statement around. However, the reversal of a metaphysical statement is still a metaphysical statement and, like metaphysics itself, remains oblivious of the truth of Being.<sup>1</sup>

Sartre's own explanation of his meaning is "that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world, and defines himself afterwards",<sup>2</sup> so that the individual by the performance of existing wills what he 'is'. In his existence he chooses and is responsible for his 'essence'.<sup>3</sup> Although Heidegger's phrase is similar to Sartre's, it appears that he criticises Sartre for considering how each man exists without questioning the ontological ground of his existence. Whatever Heidegger means by saying that the 'essence' of Dasein lies in 'existence', he does not mean that its 'essence' is uncovered once the practical everyday possibilities of choosing have been considered. Such an interpretation would reduce the meaning of 'existing' to its common meaning where it is used as a synonym

---

<sup>1</sup>M. Heidegger, Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit, Mit einem Brief über den Humanismus (Bern: A. Francke, 1947), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Paul Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism, translated by Philip Mairet (London: Methuen, 1948), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup>Sartre, op. cit., p. 47.

for 'living'. In Heidegger's view the 'everyday' possibilities of life must be analysed further before they can reveal the full meaning of man's Being.<sup>1</sup> To take the everyday choice between this or that course of action as the full content of 'existence' would be to lose sight of the distinctive character of man's Being. Such choosing is merely the selection of one route through a maze of possibilities which are 'present-at-hand'. It is a manipulation of things in the world by a being itself within the world, which leaves unquestioned the relation of that being to the world. Heidegger's thesis is that man for the most part does abandon himself to definite, concrete possibilities within the world, seeking to understand the meaning of his Being by relation to other beings. In doing so he fails to look beyond himself to his 'horizon', his true "potentiality-for-Being" in terms of which alone he can be himself.<sup>2</sup> Only by relating to the 'possibilities' of his Being which lie far beyond the everyday possibilities is he freed to grasp fully these everyday choices.<sup>3</sup>

Heidegger rejects Sartre because he too fails to look towards the 'horizon' in relation to which man becomes free. Instead he settles for a 'freedom' of choice amongst the possibilities of the moment. For Heidegger it is only because man is in some way ahead of himself that he can make these everyday choices his own. It is not that these choices are the ground of who he is. However, the everyday choices of living

---

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp. 33/12; 69/43; 360/312. He refers to the everyday choices of each man as his existentiell possibilities, which must then be analysed existentially to reveal their underlying ontological structure. His method is the well known hermenetical circle. In considering Dasein existentielly in his 'ontical' everydayness, existential-ontological conclusions are drawn, which are then used to re-interpret Dasein's everyday possibilities.

<sup>2</sup>For Heidegger's use of 'horizon', see BT, pp. 91/1; 416/365.

<sup>3</sup>See BT, p. 237/193. .



are not irrelevant to the question of who man 'is'. Because Dasein is himself in relation to his 'horizon' he is then set free for the individual ways of being himself. The relation to the 'horizon' in no way imposes a bland uniformity on Dasein. Magda King puts the matter well:

It is therefore not a priori determined by the structure of existence how a man's Being is to be his. On the contrary, it enables man to relate himself to his own ability-to-be in profoundly different ways, and so leaves it open how each factual existence is a self. Existence is thus a free way of Being, because the possibility of various modifications lies in its own structure.<sup>1</sup>

3) It might appear from the discussion on Sartre that Heidegger, with his talk of the possibilities of man's Being, has a concept of a fixed 'essence' ahead of man which must simply be worked out in his everyday existence. Such a view would accord with much contemporary thought on personal growth, which would see the goal of human existence as the development of one's full potential to be oneself, or in the words of Carl Rogers, "to be that self which one truly is".<sup>2</sup> It must be made clear that Heidegger's position on personal identity differs radically from any such developmental view of personality which implies that man can only become what he already is potentially. On this understanding the Being of man is no different from that of the seed of the plant which through time develops to the full flower. The seed is in essence the fully grown plant. The fact that man has a choice whether to grow or not whereas the plant presumably has not, does not alter the 'closed' nature of such an ontology.

It appears that this position is close to Heidegger's, so

---

<sup>1</sup>Magda King, Heidegger's Philosophy (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), p. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person (London: Constable, 1967), pp. 163ff. Rogers is quoting from S. Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death.

much so that Macquarrie seems to interpret his concept of selfhood in this way, which he compares to Aristotle's:

According to Aristotle ... the self is the actualization of the potentiality of the body ..., the bringing to fulfilment of these potentialities provided by an embodied existence in the world.<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me that what Heidegger is doing is to resist precisely the conclusions of this model. He is fully aware that all talk of the "actualisation of potentialities", or of development of selfhood, is brought up against the phenomenon of death. The "fulfilment of these potentialities provided by an embodied existence in the world", is death. The seeds of death are present in man from the moment he is born. "As soon as man comes to life, he is at once old enough to die".<sup>2</sup> The conclusion could be that if man now is defined by what he can become, then death as the end of all that he is, threatens his identity now. Heidegger's task in Being and Time is to reject this line of reasoning by re-interpreting death existentially,<sup>3</sup> so that Dasein is not crushed by the ultimate possibility of its Being, death, but is free to exist towards it.<sup>4</sup>

Heidegger's intention is to protect the freedom of existence against the threat posed to it by the inevitability of death. It is interesting that he uses the analogy of the developing flower not to illustrate determinism but rather the freedom which belongs to Dasein.

<sup>1</sup>John Macquarrie, Studies in Christian Existentialism (London: SCM, 1966), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 289/245.

<sup>3</sup>See BT, pp. 311/266, 435/384.

<sup>4</sup>The precise way in which Heidegger achieves this will be discussed in Chapter II.

The ripening fruit has the kind of Being to which becoming belongs.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger does not see the ripeness of the fruit as some 'destiny' or perfect state distanced from the fruit in its unripened state. The ripeness is "included as a 'not-yet' in the very Being of the fruit".<sup>2</sup> Dasein also, as long as it is, "is already its 'not-yet'".<sup>3</sup> With respect to death, this means that the end of Dasein is incorporated into its "Being-towards-the-end".<sup>4</sup> Thus Heidegger rejects the idea that 'man will become what he already is potentially'.

By considering the views that Heidegger rejects it is now possible to arrive at a first understanding of the axiom, "The essence of Dasein lies in existence". To use the idiom of the last paragraph, Heidegger's own position could be expressed as, man is already what he will become. In Heidegger's own language, Dasein is its possibilities.<sup>5</sup> The 'possibilities' of Being which lie ahead of Dasein do not stand over against a 'present' self. These possibilities, as yet unclarified, make Dasein itself now, and they are already in the existing Dasein in the present. For Heidegger, the 'present' and the 'future' are not divided but are brought into relation in the existing Dasein.

Such a relation can only be conceived of because of Heidegger's particular use of the word 'existence'. As has already been noted, it is not used in the sense of "the performance of living". Instead the etymological root is brought to the fore. Dasein 'ex-sists', stands-out

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 287/243.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 288/244.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 289/245.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 33/13, 68/42.



from itself towards the 'possibilities' of Being. It is these possibilities which, when they are brought into the present, give Dasein its identity. If the meaning of that identity is to be unfolded, the way lies through an examination of Dasein's 'possibilities'.

It is important to note that although Dasein's 'possibilities' define its Being, they do not circumscribe and limit it. They are not simply a list of characteristics which would make a complete identification of Dasein possible, in the same way as another being can be identified by its description. Certainly, Heidegger's analysis of Dasein is intended to be exhaustive, so that with the 'possibilities' given in Being and Time, Dasein's way of Being has been completed outlined, but this does not imply that Dasein can be 'summed up' as a whole. The possibilities cannot simply be gathered up and considered all together. To do so would be to treat Dasein once more as a substance with its various characteristics which, when taken together, exhaustively describe it.<sup>1</sup> The 'possibilities' which define Dasein, or the 'Existentials' (Existenzialen) as they are frequently called, are not prescriptive in the sense of defining how Dasein is to exist in each case. Rather they define a range of possible ways to be, within which Dasein can 'be' in a way unique to itself in each case.<sup>2</sup>

The Existentials cannot be isolated but must be understood "equiprimordially". This word is used frequently by Heidegger but is not defined explicitly. The sense is that each Existential implies all the others, and that none are derived from some "simple primal ground".<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 226/181.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, pp. 70/44f. for a definition of Existentials.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 170/131. As will be shown later, one Existential does



The range of the Existentials will be considered shortly, but first attention must be given to the other key concept of Heidegger's analysis, namely, 'Mineness' (Jemeinigkeit).

### Mineness

The concept of 'mineness' is implicit in Heidegger's claim that 'the essence of Dasein lies in existence'. In contrast to other beings which are defined as members of a class of beings, and whose individuality is given only as one instance of that general class, the identity of Dasein cannot be given by comparison with other members of the human species. Since all that Dasein 'is' in each case is found in its capacity to ex-sist, there are no grounds for comparison. It is only the capacity to ex-sist which is common to human Dasein, and it is this same common capacity which radically individualises Dasein. Dasein is a being which, because of its ex-sistence is necessarily characterised by 'mineness'.<sup>1</sup>

Several points can be made:

1) No other individual can ex-sist in place of my ex-sisting. "Only the particular Dasein decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold or neglecting."<sup>2</sup>

2) By saying that Dasein is radically individualised, Heidegger does not envisage man as an isolated monad in a worldless vacuum. "Dasein

---

occupy a special position for Heidegger, denoted as Care. It is important for him to see Dasein as a unified whole, for without such a perspective he cannot proceed to his question about the meaning of Being itself. (See BT, p. 274/231). 'Care' characterises the wholeness of Dasein in a way that no other Existential does. The importance of the wholeness of Dasein, and the meaning of care will become apparent in Chapter II.

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp. 67/42f., 33/12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 33/12.

has been individualised, but individualised as Being-in-a-world".<sup>1</sup>  
 Being-in-the-world is something that "belongs essentially to Dasein",  
 since the essence of Dasein lies in existence, and existence takes place  
 only in-a-world.<sup>2</sup>

3) In practice it is the case that man does attempt to define his identity by gathering together characteristics into a unique combination shared by no-one else. He seeks to achieve a 'personality' by comparison with others, but the very traits that he uses to distinguish himself from others are in varying degrees shared by all. His individuality gained in this way is no different in principle from the 'individuality' of a mass-produced object which is never precisely identical to its neighbours.

4) The concept of 'mineness' is being used ontologically, as the ground for the possibility of being a self at all. At this stage all that Heidegger claims is that man's Being is such that each existing Dasein is unique, and that this uniqueness stems from the fact that all it 'is' lies in its capacity to ex-sist. That is, Dasein is a being for whom 'mineness' is a defining category, for whom it is appropriate to employ the personal pronouns 'I' and 'you'.<sup>3</sup> Nothing has been said so far concerning how 'mineness' is constituted apart from the suggestion that it is related to existence. The concept of 'mineness' does not in itself imply the particular ways in which selfhood might be expressed. 'Mineness' characterises Dasein in all its ways of existing, authentic and inauthentic. Indeed 'mineness' is the condition which makes authenticity

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 233/189.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 33/13.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 68/42.

or inauthenticity possible.<sup>1</sup> The very word authentic (eigentlich) better translated as 'own most' or 'owned', reveals its connection with 'mineness'. The whole of Being and Time is a search for the ways of existing in which Dasein is most itself, or owns itself, but however Dasein exists, it is characterised by 'mineness'. It is not the case that 'mineness' is a superior state of Being which is attained only by the few who achieve authentic existence. It is rather the fact that Dasein is always characterised by 'mineness' which makes authentic (owned) or inauthentic (dis-owned) existence a possibility at all.

Since it is crucial for the argument of the thesis, it must be emphasised that in itself the concept of 'mineness' says nothing about how selfhood might be constituted. To employ a distinction that Heidegger does not use, it could be said that 'mineness' implies a particularised, but not necessarily an individualised existence. If all that Dasein 'is' lies in its capacity to ex-sist, then in each case the responsibility to be itself or not rests with it alone. No one else can ex-sist for it. But to say that Dasein is in each case responsible for its own selfhood does not imply that the ground of that selfhood is found only within its own resources.

#### Individualised Existence

It has been argued that man's capacity to ex-sist does not necessarily imply that in being himself he is radically isolated from others in his Being. Heidegger does take this step, and claims that the very structure of existence leads to the isolation of each man, so that the existence of others is irrelevant to each man's project to be himself.

---

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp.68/43; 78/53; 275/232.



Since this is a major point of difference between Heidegger and Buber, it must now be shown what leads Heidegger to his view that Dasein is not only 'particularised' but also 'individualised' by existence.

To look ahead for a moment the plan is to show how Heidegger establishes that Dasein exists "for the sake of itself", "and selects the Existentials (i.e. the possible modes of Dasein's existence) which confirm this interpretation.<sup>1</sup> His argument is that whether Dasein exists authentically or inauthentically, it always exists "for the sake of itself". However, when man faces the fact of his isolation and embraces it, then he is freed to be himself. Having established that the individual's freedom comes about through his capacity to exist "for the sake of himself", he is then able to introduce the phenomenon of death and the possibility of non-existence as a confirmation of the self-relational identity. These phenomena are not understood as a threat to the freedom of the existing self, but as a confirmation and unveiling of it. In the second chapter the question will be put whether man is free as a being who relates only to himself, or whether the phenomenon of death ahead of every man forces him into self-relation. The answer to this question is crucial for the rest of this thesis. If the individual's isolation is a direct result of his capacity to ex-sist, rather than a result of the nature of the 'possibilities' towards which he ex-sists, then there is no ground for considering Buber's relational concept of identity in the same context as Heidegger. If Heidegger is correct, when it is a question of Being, a man is himself only in relation to his own 'possibilities'. Others cannot have a part in making him who he is,

---

<sup>1</sup>See Heidegger, The Essence of Reasons, pp. 85f. for a helpful explanation of the meaning of the phrase "for the sake of itself". This notion runs through the whole of Being and Time.

for no-one else can exist for him.

How then does Heidegger show that Dasein's individualisation emerges from his capacity to ex-sist? The answer to this requires a more detailed explanation of the meaning of 'existence'. The word has a much more dynamic tone than the paraphrase, "standing out towards possibilities", would suggest. For Heidegger, existence is thought of in terms of projection, in the root sense of "throwing forth".<sup>1</sup> In existing, Dasein does not simply have its "possibilities" in view, but "throws itself forth" towards them. Clearly, these possibilities are to be interpreted ontologically, and do not signify the concrete possibilities and choices which make up everyday life. These, by being grasped and realised, lose their character as possibilities. They cannot have ontological significance since Dasein is defined radically in terms of "what is not yet".<sup>2</sup> The 'possibilities' in relation to which Dasein is itself are not those which today are still outstanding but 'one day' will be realised. If Dasein existed for possibilities which could be actualised, with their actualisation it would cease to 'be', since all that it 'is', is defined in relation to its possibilities. It is rather the case that as long as Dasein is, the possibilities of its Being lie ahead of it. One can go so far as to say that for Dasein's possibilities to remain as such, they are not only unactualised, but in principle unactualisable as well.

If this is so, what connection can there be between Dasein and the 'possibilities' towards which it 'throws' itself? The image of a horizon is helpful, although Heidegger does not use it himself in

---

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp. 184/115 and 385/336.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, p. 288/244.

this context. One of the characteristics of a horizon is that it cannot be reached. As one moves forwards, it is always beyond one, yet in that direction lies one's goal. The horizon, though distant, influences the way one acts. The possibilities of Dasein, though lying ahead and unreachable, are a part of existence now.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger's way of putting this is that;

in each case Dasein is already ahead of itself in its Being. Dasein is always 'beyond itself', not as a way of behaving towards other entities which it is not, but as Being towards the potentiality-for-Being which is itself.<sup>2</sup>

Heidegger makes clear on the next page that it is this capacity to be ahead of itself which is the characteristic of being a self. This does not mean, of course, that Dasein exists in two 'states', the 'Self' as it is 'now', and some projected, future ideal image towards which the existing 'self' relates as to some superego. That would be to drive a wedge through the concept of selfhood and would result in one of two conclusions. Either man as he appears now could be taken as 'real man', in which case the man 'ahead' in the future would be more of a 'super man' and therefore not a 'real' man at all. Or the man 'ahead' would be the 'real' man, leaving man as he appears with, in effect, a non-identity. Neither alternative represents Heidegger's view. Both result from a misunderstanding of the relation he sees between the present and the future. In the existing Dasein the sharp division between present and future becomes instead a close relationship. Dasein 'now' is not a present self which can look into the future to itself as

---

<sup>1</sup>The analogy of the horizon, like all analogies, breaks down at one point. On a journey, what at one time was the horizon can be reached and passed, although the horizon as such is always ahead. When Heidegger talks of horizon, he never implies that man can transcend his horizons. They constantly remain as the boundaries of his Being. Cf. BT, pp. 416/365 and 19/1 for Macquarrie's comment on the German connotations of the word.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 236/192.



it will be. Rather Dasein 'now' is no more or less than the anticipation of the future possibilities of its Being. In Heidegger's words, "Dasein is its possibilities".<sup>1</sup> For Heidegger all that man is, ontologically, lies in throwing himself forwards to the future possibilities of his Being, and returning to the present moment to concretise these possibilities in decisions.<sup>2</sup> There is no 'self' which then decides to project towards its future. Rather, Dasein in projecting towards its ownmost possibilities gathers an identity for itself.

The selfhood which is thus created by "being-ahead-of-itself" is necessarily isolated and individualised by the very structure of existence. In existing, Dasein in each case throws itself forward to its own possibilities, and therefore "exists for the sake of itself".<sup>3</sup> This is not meant as an egotistical statement which could be refuted by showing that people do sometimes sacrifice themselves for others, and do not in general exist for themselves alone but in community.<sup>4</sup> It simply means that Dasein's identity is in each case constituted in relation to its own possibilities, and to no-one else's. The individual cannot throw himself forth towards the possibilities ahead of another individual, since they do not form the structure of his own Being.

With these arguments, Heidegger establishes that each individual is radically alone. It is important to emphasise that he is individualised and isolated purely by the fact that there are possibilities of his Being ahead of him. The character of the possibilities has played no

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 68/42. Cf. BT, p. 385/336.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BT, p. 237/193: "In Being-ahead-of-oneself as Being towards one's ownmost potentiality-for-Being, lies the existential-ontological condition for the possibility of Being-free for authentic existentiell possibilities".

<sup>3</sup>Heidegger, Essence of Reasons, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup>Heidegger himself makes this point; *ibid.*, p. 87.

part as yet. For Heidegger, Dasein's possibilities may confirm and reveal aloneness, but they do not constitute it.<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that Dasein's possibilities play no part in identifying it. The capacity to ex-sist, and the possibilities towards which it ex-sists are interrelated. Together they reveal Dasein's radical aloneness. So far, all that has been established is that, for Heidegger, Dasein is isolated by its existence. This is a formal structure, and nothing has been said about the way in which Dasein is alone, or how it becomes aware of its aloneness. These questions must be tackled now. It should be clear that the approach to the character of Dasein's aloneness is not via an introspective examination of feelings. The whole direction of Heidegger's thought is away from the psychological self. His starting point is that Dasein's existence does not take place in a worldless vacuum, but only in a world in the presence of others. He constantly affirms that "Being-in-the-world" and "Being-with-others" belong inescapably to Dasein, in whatever state it is.<sup>2</sup> The only way to discover the meaning of the individual's isolation is through an examination of his "Being-in-the-world". The remainder of this chapter will be spent in showing how Dasein's presence in a world with others confirms and reveals its radical isolation rather than contradicting it.

### Isolation in a World

From the introductory remarks on Descartes,<sup>3</sup> it is clear that

---

<sup>1</sup>As will be shown in the next chapter, this argument is essential to the success of Heidegger's project, for with it he hopes to control the threat which death poses to personal identity.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, Division I, sections 12-27.

<sup>3</sup>See above, p. 14.

whatever Heidegger means in saying that "to Dasein, Being-in-a-world is something that belongs essentially",<sup>1</sup> there is no suggestion that Dasein is viewed as an object within a world of objects. The 'world' is not a 'receptacle' within which man is placed. Instead Being-in-the-world must be taken existentially to depict a way in which Dasein is distinct from other beings. This means that we cannot argue from the fact that man does indeed live in an environment to the conclusion that Being-in-a-world belongs inescapably to his Being. Living in an environment is not a characteristic of man alone! For Heidegger, beginning with man as he appears does not lead to an understanding of his ontological structure. That approach simply leads to the conclusion that man is present amongst other beings.<sup>2</sup> Heidegger rejects this line of reasoning, namely that Dasein is Being-in-the-world because he can be observed amongst other beings. He reverses the argument, claiming that it is only because Being-in-the-world belongs inescapably to Dasein that it has the capacity to exist at all.<sup>3</sup> This means that it is only by probing into the meaning of Being-in-the-world that the character of Dasein's existing can be reached. If the formal structure of selfhood is given by existing, as aloneness, the way in which that selfhood is worked out can only emerge from a study of the 'world', in relation to which Dasein is itself.

What then does Being-in-the-world mean existentially? By 'world' Heidegger has in mind a relational concept which cannot be

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 33/13.

<sup>2</sup>See Essence of Reasons, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 45: "Dasein, then, is not Being-in-the-world because and only because it exists factically; on the contrary, it can only be as existing, i.e. as Dasein, because its essential constitution lies in Being-in-the-world".



separated from Dasein;

Ontologically, 'world' is not a way of characterising those entities which Dasein essentially is not; it is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself.<sup>1</sup>

In saying that Being-in-a-world is a characteristic of Dasein, Heidegger means that the 'world' does not stand over against it, but that it is in relation to the 'world' that Dasein can come to be identified. 'World' is not some 'thing', nor the sum of all that is. Rather, "world simply means men in their relationships to Being in its totality".<sup>2</sup>

The concept of 'world' provides a horizon which enables man to see the range of his possibilities. It reminds him that in seeking to understand his Being, it is not sufficient to ex-sist towards everyday possibilities within the world. Such possibilities do not pose to him the question of the meaning of his Being, or at best they do so only in a disguised form. Because man has the characteristic of Being-in-the-world, he is enabled to look beyond all possibilities within the world till at last, when all everyday possibilities have been stripped away, nothing is left but 'world' itself. From this perspective man discovers that he is not only a being amongst other beings, but a being who, from "the midst of being" is himself only in relation to "Being as a totality". The movement of understanding which "anticipates and encompasses this totality" is referred to by Heidegger as transcendence, or "surpassing to the world".<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 92/64.

<sup>2</sup>Essence of Reasons, p. 81

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 85. 'Transcendence', as Heidegger uses the term, does not imply a 'self' who then moves beyond himself. 'Transcendence' which in some respects is synonymous with 'Ex-sistence', is what characterises Dasein in the first place. Only as a being which transcends can Dasein become a 'self' at all. See Essence of Reasons, p. 39, "Transcendence constitutes selfhood".

This relationship of beings to Being, the "Ontological Difference",<sup>1</sup> which is unveiled through the concept of 'world', enables Dasein to approach itself;

In approaching Being through the world, Dasein makes a self of itself, i.e. a being which is free to be.<sup>2</sup>

It is here that the significance of 'world' for an understanding of personal identity becomes clear. The ground for man's identity is to be found not in his actual physical characteristics, nor in some pre-formed notion of selfhood, but in his relation to 'world'. 'World' and selfhood are closely related. Indeed it is only by explaining the meaning of 'world' that selfhood can be defined.<sup>3</sup>

When the relationship between Dasein and 'world' is explored, it turns out that the earlier designation of Dasein as existing "for the sake of itself" is indeed confirmed.<sup>4</sup> Being-in-a-world does not mean that Dasein's isolation is dispersed by involvement in the world. Instead the isolation is made more explicit since 'world' draws Dasein beyond all the possibilities which might disguise its isolation. 'World' as the horizon beyond all horizons within the world, reveals that all the projects for the sake of which man might exist are irrelevant when it is a question of his Being. When these projects are discarded, there is no thing or no-one within the world by which he might define himself. Dasein can then only exist for its own sake, but not in the sense of a self existing within the world, which is isolated from everyone else, and therefore must turn to himself. 'World' discloses the full force

<sup>1</sup>Essence of Reasons, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 85, 89.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 85ff.

of the isolation of man because, by 'throwing' him beyond everything in the world, it shows him that he must renounce even the small comfort given by the thought, "Because I feel alone and isolated, I must at least exist". The isolation which characterises Heidegger's 'self' is more in the mood of the hollow emptiness at the centre of the wheel in Lao Tse's saying quoted in the Introduction.

Such isolation is so different from an everyday understanding that it leads to the question, how can man come to be aware of his true character? So far it has simply been stated formally that it is by its relation to the 'world' that Dasein comes to itself, but the meaning of 'world' still remains obscure. Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that by its peculiar nature 'world' cannot be compared to any thing within the world. How then can Dasein form an impression of 'world' as that horizon which brings selfhood into focus? Heidegger's answer lies with the phenomenon of Anxiety (Angst).

#### The Function of Anxiety

It is the phenomenon of Anxiety which reveals to Dasein the character of "Being-in-the-world", and confirms that its identity is given only in relation to itself. To arrive at the significance of Anxiety, Heidegger contrasts it with the phenomenon of Fear. Fear is always felt in the face of some definite threat within the world.<sup>1</sup> Although it may be felt as a desire to escape from the source of the fear, Heidegger argues that in fact the opposite is true. In fear Dasein flees, not away from "entities within the world", but towards them. Attention is diverted from the being which fears, (Dasein), to the object of fear.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 179/140.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 230/186.



"Entities within the world are not relevant to the threat which Anxiety discloses. That in the face of which we have Anxiety is completely indefinite."<sup>1</sup> There is no possibility of identifying an object of Anxiety, as is the case with fear, and for that reason it is not possible for Dasein to escape the conclusion that what it is anxious about is itself. The indefinite nature of the threat is precisely what leads Dasein to itself for it brings the realisation that all of its "involvements" within the world are of no consequence. The world "has the character of completely lacking significance", where 'world' here means the sum of all that is.<sup>2</sup> Anxiety discloses that nothing in the world constitutes Dasein's identity.<sup>3</sup> On the basis of this insignificance of what is within the world, "the world in its worldhood is all that still obtrudes itself".<sup>4</sup> Anxiety strips Dasein of the security of a network of relations within the world and leaves it face to face with the emptiness of the 'worldhood' of the world. To borrow a phrase from one of Heidegger's later books, Anxiety opens Dasein to the question, "Why is there anything rather than nothing?".<sup>5</sup> It is the silence of the answer given by Anxiety that discloses Dasein to itself. Neither a relationship to projects within the world, nor a relationship to other human beings are able to erase the threat posed by Anxiety, the threat that the ground of what it is lies in nothingness.<sup>6</sup> In Anxiety, "Dasein finds itself

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 179/140.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 231/186.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. BT, pp. 231/187; 321/276; 393/343.

<sup>4</sup>BT, p. 231/187.

<sup>5</sup>An Introduction to Metaphysics, translated by Ralph Manheim (Yale University Press, 1959), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. BT, p. 232/187: "The 'World' can offer nothing more, and neither can the Dasein--with of Others".

face to face with the 'nothing' of the possible impossibility of its existence".<sup>1</sup>

Anxiety reveals to Dasein that the distinctive character of the horizon of the 'world' is its nothingness. If Dasein is itself in projecting towards the 'possibilities' of its Being, Anxiety shows that its ownmost possibility is of non-existence. The full significance of Heidegger's choice of the word 'Da-sein' as an ontological category becomes clear. It is 'Being-there' as opposed to the possibility of 'Being-not-there'. The role of Anxiety is to let this basic possibility of Dasein show itself as it truly is, undisguised by projects and things within the world to which Dasein tends to cling.<sup>2</sup> It is the possibility of the 'Not' belonging to each Dasein singly and uniquely which identifies it. In Magda King's words,

In the finiteness of his Being, each man is sheerly uninterchangeable. No one can take his Being off him and bear it for him.<sup>3</sup>

It is the possibility of his non-existence which makes each man unique. Nothing else, or no-one else is ontologically relevant. Anxiety, by showing Dasein what the possibility ahead of it is, confirms that it is individualised and alone. It indicates that the choice before it is to 'own' or 'dis-own' its aloneness, i.e. to be authentic or inauthentic.

Heidegger's argument is that in this choice lies man's freedom. Anxiety frees man to be himself, or rather, it allows him to be free to choose whether to be alone as an 'owned' self or lose himself in the anonymity of the crowd.<sup>4</sup> He can do nothing about the fact that non-existence

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 310/266.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BT, p. 235/191.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>4</sup>BT, p. 232/188.

lies ahead of him, but he can choose to accept that fact and make it his own, or to try to deny what is inevitable. This point is important, for it touches on one of the crucial issues between Heidegger and Buber. Is man truly free as an individual whose identity is defined solely in relation to his own future, a future which is thrust upon him? Is one free in accepting the inevitable? The rest of Being and Time can be seen as an attempt to defend Heidegger's concept of selfhood against the threat posed to it by the unavoidable character of much of man's existence, and in particular his death. Heidegger's arguments will be considered in the next chapter, with these critical questions in mind. At present the point is raised simply to indicate that Heidegger associates the idea of freedom with man's aloneness.

To summarise the arguments so far, it has been shown that for Heidegger, the uniqueness of each man comes from his capacity to ex-sist, to "throw himself forward" to the possibilities of his Being. No one else can exist for him. In his Being he is independent of others. His Being-in-a-world confirms rather than contradicts this isolation. The way he is in-the-world is revealed by Anxiety. Through Anxiety he is made aware that the possibility which makes him most himself is that of his own non-existence. Of all possibilities, this is the one which he alone must face. In these arguments an ambiguity can be discerned. Heidegger seems to suggest both that the uniqueness of the individual comes from his ex-sisting and from the particular character of the possibilities ahead of him. At this stage the question must simply be asked whether man's aloneness is truly a result of his capacity to ex-sist or whether it is forced upon him by his possibility of non-existence. This question is connected with the issue of man's freedom and will be tackled in Chapter II. This chapter concludes with some comments on the significance Heidegger attaches to the presence of others in the world.



Isolation in the Presence of Others

In the last section it was shown that although Heidegger claimed that Being-in-the-world was essential to Dasein, this confirmed rather than contradicted his 'existential solipsism'. A similar argument occurs in the chapter on 'Being-with-Others',<sup>1</sup> where Heidegger claims that "Dasein is essentially Being-with".<sup>2</sup> In using the word 'essentially', Heidegger implies that it belongs to the definition of Dasein that it exists with others. Does this mean that Dasein finds its identity not only in relation to its ownmost possibility but also in relation to other Dasein? From what has been said above, the answer should be 'no'. Anxiety has disclosed that each individual is made uniquely himself by the threat of Nothingness ahead, and this precludes any possibility that a relation of one individual to another could make him himself.

What then does Heidegger mean by saying that 'Being-with' (Mitsein) is essential to Dasein? In the first place this is another symptom of Heidegger's antipathy to Cartesian ontology. It amounts to a refusal to start with an isolated ego which is supposedly the only 'given', requiring that the existence of others be proved.<sup>3</sup> As Sartre comments:

In his abrupt, rather barbaric fashion of cutting Gordian Knots rather than trying to untie them, he gives in answer to the question posited a pure and simple definition.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, Division I, Chapter 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 156/120: "Dasein ist wesenschaft Mitsein." Cf. p. 163/125. "In so far as Dasein is at all, it has Being -with-one-another as it kind of Being".

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 151/115.

<sup>4</sup>Jean Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, translated and introduced by Hazel Barnes (London: Methuen, 1957), p. 244. Hereafter referred to as BN.

For Heidegger that question, "How do I know that others exist?" is far from being the starting point for philosophical inquiry. Just as a bare subject without a world is not 'given', neither is an isolated 'I' without others. Others are already there with us in the world.<sup>1</sup> This does not contradict what has been said about Dasein's individuality. Heidegger's talk of Dasein as 'essentially' Being-with-others is not intended to dissolve isolation but to place it on the right foundation. Instead of an isolated Self in a worldless void, he advocates isolation as Being-in-the-world and Being-with-others. Only on the basis of Being-with-others is the isolated existence of Dasein realisable. Of course, as with Dasein's existence in-the-world, this does not mean that Dasein just happens to exist along with others. That would be a way of viewing man as an objectified self in the company of other selves. Heidegger's point is that Being-with-others must be viewed existentially, i.e. in a way which expressed Dasein's unique way of Being. When that is done, Being-with-others should reveal each Dasein's character as an isolated individual.

How then is Dasein with others in the world, in a way which does not challenge its isolation? Sartre discusses this question, and observes that while the Idealists talk of Being-for-others, Heidegger says that Dasein is with others. According to Sartre;

Hegel's brilliant intuition is to make me depend on the other in my Being. I am, he said, a being for-itself which is for-itself only through another. Therefore the other penetrates me to the heart.<sup>2</sup>

On this understanding of personal identity, the other constitutes my

---

<sup>1</sup>See BT, p. 152/116.

<sup>2</sup>Sartre, BN, p. 237. Cf. Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, Volume III, pp. 10-24.

selfhood. If the relationship to the other is removed, 'I' am lost. In this way an alternative to Cartesian solipsism is proposed. The existence of others is assumed, for without them, there could be no self at all. According to Sartre, Heidegger takes this position and modifies it. Others are with Dasein but they are not a part of it. Instead of constituting the identity of the individual by relating to him, the role of the other is to reveal that he is himself in self-relation only. Heidegger states clearly that,

the expression 'Dasein' ... shows plainly that 'in the first instance' this entity is unrelated to others, and that of course it can still be 'with' others afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

It is Being-there, in the light of Being-not-there, which identifies Dasein and makes it unique in each case. Being-with-others cannot alleviate that isolation. Others are ontologically relevant to each Dasein only in that they share the capacity to ex-sist. Dasein finds that it is alongside others who are also projecting towards possibilities ahead of them. Of course the individual does not encounter these 'others' as examples of the human species who are merely 'there'. They have the character of Dasein itself as 'Being-in-the-world. Dasein itself forms part of the relational complex of their world. Others are 'with' Dasein in that they too are not ensnared as objects within the world. They share the characteristic of 'not being at home' in the world.<sup>2</sup> In shared Anxiety, Dasein discovers that the existence of others and the world itself can do no more than reveal aloneness. Sartre captures Heidegger's intention when he likens the relationship with others to,

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 156/120.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, p. 233/189 for Heidegger's treatment of the "not-at-home" (unheimlich) character of Dasein.



the mute existence in common of one member of the crew [of a boat] with his fellows, that existence which the rhythm of the oars or the regular movements of the coxswain will render sensible to the rowers and which will be made manifest to them by the common goal to be attained, the boat or the yacht to be overtaken, and the entire world ... which is profiled on the horizon. It is on the common ground of this co-existence that the abrupt revelation of my "being-unto-death" will suddenly make me stand out in an absolute "common solitude" while at the same time it raises others to that solitude.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Dasein's isolated character does not mean that each individual ignores others. There is a common task, that of liberating others to be themselves, and being freed by them. Although ontologically man is himself in isolation, this is not clear to him. He needs to be freed from his everyday way of interpreting himself in terms of immediate concerns. For the most part he does not 'own' himself. He is absorbed with others from whom he does not distinguish himself.<sup>2</sup> It has been noted that Anxiety frees Dasein to be itself, but this is not something which takes place in separation from the existence with others. In a way it is the shared existence with others which mediates the power of Anxiety to isolate each individual. Earlier it was shown that, for Heidegger, it was only when Dasein realised the insignificance of the world as a whole that it was free to be itself. Here, using a similar argument, it can be said that Being-with-others is an inseparable aspect of Dasein, for only with them can the full extent of its aloneness be appreciated.

The only possible ontological relationship between individuals which Heidegger can allow is the mutual concealing or exposing of this aloneness. It is now further clarified why Heidegger insists that existing "for the sake of oneself" is not a self-centred pursuit, carried out at

---

<sup>1</sup>Sartre, BN, p. 247. Sartre is critical of Heidegger's notion of 'mute co-existence' because it ignores the conflict which characterises human relationships. For Sartre the other is a threat to identity.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, p. 154/118.

the expense of others. Dasein's existence cannot be subdivided into concern for oneself and concern for others. In existing for the sake of one's own Being, one necessarily exists for the sake of the Being of others, one is freeing others to be their own selves. The choice between 'owned' and 'dis-owned' existence is not made in isolation from others but influences them and is influenced by them.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger outlines the extreme ways in which this influence is expressed. In one extreme, an individual can attempt to 'bind' the others who form his world by 'leaping in' (einspringen) and taking over to himself the concerns which belong to the other. In so doing he is attempting to smother the radical aloneness of the other. By removing from him his responsibility for his own concern, he takes away from the other the opportunity to experience Anxiety and therefore to come to himself.

In the other extreme, the individual does not 'leap in' for the other but 'leaps ahead' (vorspringen). The intention is not to take away the other's responsibility for himself, but to help him to realise the true nature of his existence.<sup>2</sup> The important point is that the relationship between individuals is concerned with the mutual awareness of being a self, whether the intention is to conceal or expose that selfhood. Throughout, it is the aloneness of Being-there which dominates Heidegger's talk of Being-with-others.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. BT, p. 237/193.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, pp.158/122f.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. BT, p. 344/298. "Dasein's resoluteness towards itself is what first makes it possible to let the Others who are with it 'be' in their ownmost potentiality-for-Being, and to co-disclose this potentiality in the solicitude which leaps forth and liberates.... Only by authentically Being-their-Selves in resoluteness can people authentically be with one another."

In the light of this understanding of Being-with-others, it is not surprising that Heidegger has little to say about direct encounter. He talks of Dasein becoming aware indirectly of others through artefacts in the world. He is content with saying that "Others are 'encountered' in a ready to hand, environmental context of equipment".<sup>1</sup> For instance a boat anchored at the shore is "indicative of others".<sup>1</sup> Even in the description given in the last paragraph of the concern by one individual to free another to be himself, there is no suggestion of a direct encounter. As Macquarrie notes, the word Fürsorge (Solicitude) used by Heidegger to denote this concern does not mean a caring for another in a personal way but rather 'welfare work', or 'charity'.<sup>2</sup> One could have concern for another without relating to them directly.<sup>2</sup> On this point Sartre is correct when he says that Heidegger changes the "frontal opposition" of the other over against one to an "oblique interdependence of individuals who in each case make a world to exist as a complex of instruments which they use for the ends of their human reality" and who find themselves caught up in each other's worlds.<sup>3</sup>

In the section on Buber, an analysis of personal identity contrasting starkly with this model of indirect co-existence will be given. At this stage the question is simply raised as to why Heidegger is so wary of direct encounter between individuals. Could it be that he is forced to deny the ontological relevance of direct relationships with others because they challenge the whole structure of his ontology? By asserting that Dasein is itself in Being-ahead-of-itself, Heidegger

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 154/118.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 157/121 footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup>Sartre, BN, p. 246.



claims that the only 'other' for Dasein is its own future non-existence. As will be discussed in the next chapter he acknowledges that death is the non-relational possibility before all others.<sup>1</sup> In the face of that possibility he must discount a range of phenomena as of no ontological significance, or at best as an aspect of Dasein's tendency to 'lose' itself in absorption with others. For Heidegger 'love' cannot be an ontological term.<sup>2</sup> If it were, this would imply that Dasein's identity was constituted not only in relation to its own existence, but also in relation to others. Heidegger cannot allow this, for each Dasein is responsible only for its own existence. All that can be done for others is to free them to be themselves.

Heidegger's attitude to others is gathered together in a few words at the end of The Essence of Reasons:

Man, as existing transcendence abounding in and surpassing towards possibilities, is a creature of distance. Only through the primordial distances he establishes toward all Being in his transcendence does a true nearness to things flourish in him. And only the knack for hearing into the distance awakens Dasein as self to the answer of its Dasein with others. For only in its Being-with-Others can Dasein surrender its 'I-hood' (Ichheit) in order to win itself as an authentic self.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp.294/251ff.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Gelven, op. cit., p. 53, observes that Heidegger does not talk of love, but he misses the significance of the omission. He thinks that Heidegger has chosen Existentials which are broadest in scope, and include all the others. Love, argues Gelven, is simply a special kind of caring. It is the argument of this thesis that 'love' cannot merely be added to the list of Existentials. It challenges the basis of Heidegger's ontology since if love is an ontological category, it demands that death be considered in a different light, as that which crushes personal identity rather than confirming it.

<sup>3</sup>Op. cit., p. 131.

Summary

Contrary to the popular impression that it is death alone which shapes Heidegger's concept of authentic existence, it has been shown here that the structure of personal identity has been laid down with hardly a mention of death. He argues that the isolation of each individual emerges directly from his definition of man as a being with the capacity to exist, i.e. to project himself towards his future. In a sense which has yet to be explained fully, man is a being who is ahead of himself. As the argument progressed, it became clear that the character of man's future played a large part in shaping the form of his existence now. This leads to the question whether the isolation, which Heidegger claims is an expression of man's freedom, is forced on him by the non-existence ahead of him. In the next chapter the role of death for Heidegger will be examined, with this critical question in mind, whether the 'freedom' of Dasein's aloneness turns out to be a false freedom.

## CHAPTER II

### DEATH AND THE FREEDOM TO BE ONESELF

In the last chapter Heidegger's understanding of existence was presented in a one-sided way, by concentrating on the capacity to 'stand out' towards possibilities. It has been shown that Dasein's identity is formed in throwing itself forward towards its ownmost possibilities. In this way "the self has been characterised ontologically by Being-ahead-of-itself".<sup>1</sup>

From what has been said, an inaccurate impression could be gained, and this must now be corrected. It might appear that in defining Dasein solely by its capacity to ex-sist, Heidegger has presented an abstraction from the 'real' man who is not simply free in relation to the future, but is also bound by his present and past state. Is the freedom of Heidegger's 'man' established only by denying everything which is not under his control? In this chapter it will be shown that Heidegger by no means ignores the obstinate 'givenness' of much of man's existence, but there is sufficient ambiguity in his thought to give grounds for the impression. The confusion arises partly from his somewhat equivocal use of the word "existence", which Heidegger himself does not acknowledge. In the first chapter what might be called the narrow sense of "ex-sistence" was introduced. This denotes the freedom of Dasein towards its future, and in this thesis always appears hyphenated. In some contexts "existence" is used in a broad sense referring to all the dimensions of Dasein's way of Being.

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 237/193.



In the first sense, freedom is a defining characteristic of ex-sisting Dasein. For Heidegger, it is not the case that Dasein is free because of its capacity for ex-sistence. Rather the capacity for ex-sistence belongs to Dasein because it is free. In a way Dasein does not possess freedom; freedom possesses Dasein. In the words of one commentator, Dasein is "constitutionally free" for it "contains within itself a dynamism that propels it towards achieving itself as transcendence, a propensity, so to speak, for authenticity".<sup>1</sup> Dasein is, in a sense, condemned to be free, since it has no choice concerning its character as an ex-sisting Being, with which its freedom is associated.

In the second sense of "existence", Dasein's "constitutional freedom" is seen in relation to the other dimensions which determine its Being. The ambiguity in Heidegger's use of "existence" reflects a tension running through Being and Time, between freedom and determinism, a tension which, it will be argued here, remains unresolved. Attention will now be turned to this relation between Dasein's freedom to be itself, and its being immersed in a world which is not of its choosing.

First, the dimensions of Dasein other than the capacity to ex-sist must be outlined. Heidegger designates these as facticity (Faktizitat) and being Fallen (Verfallen). He seeks to define Dasein completely with these "Existentials". He affirms that Dasein's capacity to ex-sist is not some "free-floating" behaviour which attempts to escape the fact that it is "thrown" into a world it did not choose.<sup>2</sup> Although

---

<sup>1</sup>William J. Richardson, Heidegger (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1962), p. 187. Heidegger explicitly denies that freedom is a possession of Dasein in the "Essay on the Essence of Truth", English translation in Existence and Being, translated by W. Brock (London: Vision Press, 1949), p. 336. Cf. also Essence of Reasons, pp. 103, 129.

<sup>2</sup>For the concept of "thrownness" (Geworfenheit) see especially, BT, p. 174/135 and section 38, pp. 219-224 (176-180).

Dasein may choose to exist in various ways, it has no choice about the fact that it exists. Inseparable from the capacity to ex-sist is the fact that it is. Of course, for Heidegger this does not simply mean that Dasein is, as a matter of fact, present as a being amongst other beings. Facticity must be understood existentially, so that it expresses Dasein's particular way of Being.<sup>1</sup> There is no intention of considering man as the empirical being who can be observed factually. As always, Heidegger's method is to look beyond what can be observed, so that from a different perspective, that which can be observed is seen in a fresh and illuminating way. So with his consideration of facticity, Heidegger is attempting to avoid the 'brute fact' that we have no choice about being here. Instead his intention is to integrate that obstinate "givenness" into Dasein's existence. Thus for Heidegger, the fact that Dasein is "delivered over" or "thrown" into facticity is not something to be resisted, but embraced as an aspect of Dasein's way of Being. Facticity is not something set over against Dasein's freedom. It is an aspect of Dasein itself and pervades the whole of its Being. Thus, not only is Dasein "thrown" in the sense that what it has already been, and is now, is determined, but also it is "thrown" into its future. "It is thrown into the kind of Being which we call 'projecting'".<sup>2</sup> Secondly, the range of possibilities towards which it projects are not chosen. The nothingness surrounding Being is not chosen as a horizon by which Dasein is defined. The only choice open to Dasein is whether to accept these possibilities as its own, or to turn away from them.

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. BT, p. 174/135: "facticity is not the factuality of the factum brutum of something present-at-hand, but a characteristic of Dasein's Being--one which has been taken up into existence, even if proximally it has been thrust aside."

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 185/145.

Heidegger's analysis is that, for the most part, in its everyday existence Dasein does try to evade or ignore its possibilities and thereby itself, by absorbing itself in the 'world' of its concern. This phenomenon is designated as Dasein's tendency to fall (verfallen):

Dasein has in the first instance fallen away from itself, as an authentic potentiality for Being itself, and has fallen into the 'world'.<sup>1</sup>

Dasein retreats from the horizon of nothingness which bears down upon it, and in terms of which alone it can be released to be itself. Instead the attempt is made to find an identity in relation to things within the world. Dasein becomes absorbed in other people and projects within the world. It is inauthentic, or not-owned. Its identity is lost in the anonymous 'they-self' (Das Man).<sup>2</sup> Its attitudes and behaviour are shaped by what 'they' think and do. 'They' are the anonymous mass, the 'others' by comparison with whom Dasein attempts to measure itself. The attempt is made to draw together an identity by the differences from others, by asking whether it has lagged behind others or has some advantage over them which it seeks to maintain. Its Being-with-others is characterised by 'Distantiality' (Abständigkeit) or as Magda King has it, by an "existential standoffishness".<sup>3</sup>

This attempt to stand off from others in order to establish an identity is literally self-defeating. Comparison with others, whether as superior or inferior, means being judged by their standards, and is an evasion of Dasein's responsibility for its own self in each case. The others dominate Dasein and take its Being from it. It is disburdened

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 220/175.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, Division I:4, pp. 163/126ff.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 164/126. Magda King, op. cit. p. 112.





of the Being which is singly and solely its own.<sup>1</sup> In this mode of existence which Heidegger describes as everydayness, Dasein is not itself. It is a 'they-self'. "The particular Dasein has been dispersed into the 'they' and must first find itself."<sup>2</sup>

Heidegger's conclusion is that, for the most part, the 'pull' of facticity is such that,

as long as it is what it is, Dasein remains in the throw,  
and is sucked into the turbulence of the "they's" unauthenticity.<sup>3</sup>

In other words man never exists in some free realm which is untouched by his 'thrownness' into a world, not of his choosing, nor can he avoid the tendency to fall, i.e. to turn away from his destiny to be himself.<sup>4</sup>

Does this mean that Dasein is condemned to be a divided being estranged from its 'true' self? Apparently Dasein cannot escape the everydayness which leads to being ensnared by 'falling', and alienation from 'self'. Has all talk of ex-sisting towards possibilities been a theoretical construction which cannot be realised in practice? It has been noted that Heidegger sees Anxiety as a phenomenon which brings Dasein to its self, but can Anxiety do any more than disclose the radical alienation of a being whose freedom is to stand out towards possibilities, but who is confined and crushed by facticity and the tendency to fall?

The rest of Being and Time is concerned largely with these

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Magda King, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 167/129.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 223/179.

<sup>4</sup>It should be noted that for Heidegger "falling" has no theological connotation, nor does it imply a negative evaluation of Dasein. His concept operates simply as a phenomenological observation.

questions which may be summarised as follows:

1. Is it possible for Dasein, characterised by the three dimensions of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness, to be a whole?
2. Is Heidegger's concept of identity realisable, i.e. can Dasein exist authentically?

As Werner Brock points out, both questions are related to, and even subservient to another problem, that of Temporality.<sup>1</sup> It is in terms of temporality that Heidegger finally understands the wholeness and selfhood of Dasein. This means that before the success of Heidegger's concept of identity can be judged, the analysis of Being and Time must be continued, as it moves towards temporality as the basis of man's wholeness. The importance of the concept of 'wholeness' for the thesis cannot be overemphasised. It is only on the ground of a wholeness of Dasein that selfhood can be understood. Indeed, since Heidegger has abandoned any pre-supposed notion of 'self' lying behind existence, it should be clear that once the wholeness of Dasein is established, the search for identity can go no further. For Heidegger, being oneself is nothing other than existing authentically as a whole. The task ahead is to examine critically the notion of wholeness, for if Dasein is not a whole but is a fragmented being, so is its identity.

Before proceeding with the analysis, it may help to give an over-all perspective, and an indication of the structure of this chapter. Heidegger's purpose in Being and Time is to raise anew the question of the meaning of Being. In this early stage of his thought he argues that Being cannot be questioned directly, but access is available through a study of Dasein. Dasein is a being which from within the midst of

---

<sup>1</sup>Existence and Being, p. 68. The same questions are isolated by John Macquarrie, Martin Heidegger (London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), p. 28.

beings relates to Being itself. The preliminary task in his analysis is to form an impression of Dasein in its wholeness, for until the Being of Dasein has been laid bare in its completeness, there is no possibility of proceeding to an understanding of the meaning of Being itself. In the published part of Being and Time, Heidegger does not succeed in moving beyond the preliminary task. The whole book is occupied, first with identifying the dimensions of Dasein, and secondly in showing how they are united.

In the first section, the threefold structure of Dasein is identified as existentiality, facticity, and fallenness, but these Existentials raise a methodological problem which has not yet been mentioned. His argument is that the meaning of Dasein's Being cannot be investigated directly because of its tendency to fall, to conceal its Being by understanding itself in terms of projects within the world. The tendency to fall is not a characteristic which Dasein exhibits in some states only. All three Existentials belong inseparably to Dasein in whatever ways it 'is'. But if falling is an inseparable aspect of Dasein's structure, this means that there is the constant temptation to see itself in terms of other beings; it is "tranquillised" so that there is no awareness even that it is "entangled" in the "downward plunge" of "falling".<sup>1</sup> The fact that there is a distance between its 'true' selfhood and the supposed identity it achieves in everydayness remains hidden from it. But if Dasein is unaware of alienation from its 'true' self, how can there be any possibility of attaining authentic selfhood, and how can an analysis of falling Dasein lead to a knowledge of the wholeness of its Being? Furthermore, Heidegger's thesis that

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp. 222/178 f.



Dasein is distinctive in that its Being is an issue for it, seems refuted if it is shown that fallenness belongs inseparably to it, i.e. that in its everydayness Dasein has lost itself and is unaware of that fact.<sup>1</sup>

Heidegger's answer is that his thesis is refuted only if a radical division is created between man in his fallenness and 'true' man. He is resisting any notion that 'falling' changes Dasein's ontological status. If it did, no analysis of Dasein in the state of being fallen would lead to a knowledge of authentic Dasein, since the empirical fallen Dasein would have no ontological connection with 'true' Dasein. It would amount to saying that man as he appears is not 'real' man. Heidegger's position is that fallenness is an inseparable aspect of man, which he displays even when authentic. There is no dichotomy between 'fallen' man and 'real' man. 'Whole' or 'united' man is still fallen.<sup>2</sup> Thus fallenness does not represent a corrupt state which is set in opposition to a state of grace. For Heidegger the wholeness of man is a concept which embraces all three Existentials of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness. The significance of this position is far reaching. At the end of the chapter this view of man will be criticised and the question raised whether the wholeness of man might not involve the rejection rather than the acceptance of facticity and fallenness. At this stage in the argument, the question is simply posed, is Dasein truly open to the future, if wholeness and authenticity involve acceptance of facticity, which emerges from the past, and fallenness which is concerned with the present? Is Dasein's selfhood truly

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 222/178.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BT, p. 225/181: "Being-in-the-world is always fallen."

constituted by future possibilities or is it formed by what it already has been and is now? These questions indicate that the crucial test of Heidegger's notion of wholeness lies in how he relates past, present, and future. Can man truly be free and whole by accepting that he is already thrown into a world he has not chosen, and that in every present situation he has a tendency to turn away from authentic existence? It is not by chance that Heidegger declares in the preface to Being and Time that his plan is to present "an Interpretation of Time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatever of Being".<sup>1</sup> A new interpretation of time is demanded by the preliminary assumption that the freedom, and selfhood of man are found in his relation to the future. To defend that thesis, the parameters he must use are the past and the present. Thus the freedom and determinism debate is recast in temporal terms.

The rest of Being and Time is taken up with that defence, and shows that the three Existentials of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness, when analysed further reveal their ground in a temporal unity. This insight cannot be demonstrated directly but proceeds by a closer examination of Dasein's relation to its possibilities, and to the peculiar possibility of death. In Division II death is analysed as that which brings Dasein as a whole into view. In Division II<sup>2</sup> attention is turned from Dasein's future death, to the present situation, and to the question of being authentic in the present. In Division II<sup>3</sup> the crucial link between death and the present situation is made, crucial because with that link Heidegger has established an intimate connection between future and present. This step enables him to present a unified interpretation of time, which then forms the ultimate ground

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 19/1.

of the wholeness of Dasein. The last three sections of the book are taken up with going over what has been previously said, but with the new key of the unified understanding of time. The task here is to make clear the steps of Heidegger's argument, and to criticise the conclusions he reaches. The over-all intention is not simply to add yet another to the list of commentaries on Being and Time, but to show whether Heidegger's concept of personal identity as radical aloneness is coherent. How then does he defend the wholeness and therefore the identity of Dasein?

### 'CARE' and Wholeness

At the beginning of Division I<sup>6</sup>, Heidegger declares that the question concerning him in the first part of Being and Time is the relationship between ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness. These dimensions have been identified in the earlier pages as those which define Dasein, and now the question must be faced whether they form a united whole, or do they co-exist in uneasy tension.<sup>1</sup> At this stage Heidegger seems to brush over the problem of a supposed unity of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness by announcing simply that they are not,

... pieces belonging to something composite, one of which might sometimes be missing; but there is woven together in them a primordial context which makes up that totality of the structural whole which we are seeking.<sup>2</sup>

It seems that, for Heidegger, Dasein is a unity by definition. This supposition is strengthened by the emphasis he lays on the phenomenon of Care.<sup>3</sup> This concept is introduced as the structure which reveals

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 225/181.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 235/191.

<sup>3</sup>The concept is considered thoroughly in BT Division I<sup>6</sup>, pp. 225-273/180-230.



Dasein's Being in its wholeness, but the word 'care' in itself takes us no further towards an explanation of the unity of Dasein. It appears that 'care' is used simply to gather into one term the three dimensions of Dasein, without any demonstration that there is a corresponding unity in Dasein itself. Thus 'care' is defined, in cumbersome language, as:

ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world).<sup>1</sup>

Heidegger explains that 'care' is not primarily a psychological concept, and has nothing to do with meanings such as 'caring for' and 'carefreeness',<sup>2</sup> thus the context of the term is given solely by the definition which does no more than juxtapose ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness. Heidegger hints at a ground for unity when he says that each part of this definition includes the others, so that when, for instance the capacity to ex-sist, or Being-ahead-of-oneself, is analysed closely, it transpires that it is never isolated from the fact that one is already in-the-world, and that Being-in-the world carries with it the constant temptation to be absorbed in the world. This, however is more a statement of the problem than a solution, a problem which he states directly in the same context,

Existing is always factical. Existentiality is essentially determined by facticity.<sup>3</sup>

The problem is that if man's capacity to ex-sist is encompassed or determined by facticity, how can he be free in his ex-sistence? The concept of 'care', at least as it is defined at this stage of Heidegger's enquiry, cannot provide an answer to that question. Heidegger is aware

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 237/192.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 236/192.

that the complex structure of his definition is unsatisfactory, and takes the complexity itself as a sign that the structure of 'care' must be investigated further to discover a "still more primordial" phenomenon underlying it and providing the ground of its unity.<sup>1</sup> As has already been noted, temporality is that which holds together the Being of Dasein, but this conclusion cannot be reached directly. It can only come as a result of analysing Dasein's existence. It is at this point that the phenomenon of death is introduced. Death, for Heidegger, is that phenomenon which enables Dasein to be viewed as a whole. Our analysis of Heidegger's concept of identity will conclude with a discussion of his treatment of death, and its significance for the existence of Dasein. Since the arguments presented by Heidegger are complex, it may help to isolate beforehand his motives for introducing the concept of death.

1) For Heidegger, death opens the way to temporality and the whole unity of Dasein. Death is presented as the phenomenon which enables Dasein to be a unity of freedom and 'thrownness'. This unity is shown to be closely linked with the interplay of future, past and present, and thus leads to a theory of the unity of time, which Heidegger believed, is the key to Being itself.

2) Dasein has already been defined as 'ahead-of-itself'. Death is chosen as the phenomenon which reveals Dasein as a whole, for of all the possibilities ahead, death is the one which cannot be avoided. It is Dasein's 'ownmost' possibility.

3) Death not only has an integrating function, but also presents a threat to Dasein's identity. Heidegger argues that in relating

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 241/196.

to its own future, Dasein is free. This is apparently not so with death, for far from being a possibility which frees Dasein to be itself, death is the end of all possibilities. To defend his notion of freedom, Heidegger must show how death can be a 'way of Being' of Dasein. He must existentialise death, and thereby remove the threat which it poses. The following pages are concerned with the steps in Heidegger's argument.

### Death and the Identity of Dasein

It has been shown that by his capacity to step beyond the present moment, man is freed for the possibility of being himself. In projecting towards the possibilities which define his Being, man is freed from the 'they self' to 'own' his 'aloneness'. It was pointed out in the last chapter that there is an ambiguity as to what precisely constitutes personal identity. Is uniqueness conferred on each Dasein by the very character of ex-sistence, or by the particular nature of the possibilities which are faced? In the discussion on death this ambiguity appears again, but is complicated by a further problem. There are certain problems about describing death as a 'possibility' for Dasein, although undoubtedly it lies ahead of Dasein in every case. Death appears to be a 'possibility' which accomplishes something different from Heidegger's expectation for it. Far from constituting the identity of Dasein, or even revealing an identity given solely by the capacity to ex-sist, death seems to annihilate Dasein even as it ex-sists. By his very insistence that Dasein is itself in projecting towards the future, Heidegger has made it vulnerable to death as the cancellation of the future. If identity was given in some non-temporal way then death as a future phenomenon would not affect it. But if identity is given in relation to the future, the future has a direct influence on



identity 'now'. How then can Dasein's wholeness be revealed by relating to death?

Heidegger first tackles the seeming impossibility of applying the concept of wholeness to Dasein.<sup>1</sup> He has shown that as long as Dasein exists, it is ahead of itself. There is "always something still outstanding".<sup>2</sup> Dasein is a whole when there is no longer anything outstanding, but at that point Dasein no longer is at all. The conclusion seems to be that as long as Dasein is itself, i.e. a being which projects beyond itself, it cannot be a whole. By the very basis of its existence, Dasein is condemned to travel toward a destination which it will never reach. Is it not then a hopeless task to search for a wholeness of Dasein? Before accepting that conclusion Heidegger asks if the relation of Dasein to what is ahead is being understood correctly, i.e. in an existential way.<sup>3</sup> If it is possible to consider the 'end' existentially, then a concept of the wholeness of the existing Dasein may be reached.

Having argued that wholeness, when analysed existentially is appropriate to Dasein, Heidegger returns to his task of interpreting death as that phenomenon which enables Dasein to be a whole. Here the ambiguity mentioned above comes to the fore. It is argued that of all Dasein's possibilities death has a particular place. None of Dasein's 'everyday' possibilities have the power to release authentic selfhood, for in all such possibilities one can be represented by another. Indeed in everyday existence, "one 'is' what one does .... Here, one

---

<sup>1</sup> BT, pp.276/253 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 279/236.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 280/237.

Dasein can and must, within certain limits, 'be' another Dasein".<sup>1</sup>

The result of such an equation of 'being' and 'doing' is that the basis of a unique identity is lost. If one 'is' what one does, then one's actions can be carried out by another playing the same role. One can be "represented" or "deputised" by another.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the matter can be stated more strongly than Heidegger does. 'Deputising' suggests that someone 'stands in' temporarily for someone else. But if one's identity is completely reduced to one's function, then one can not only be represented, but even replaced by another. Not only can one's role be taken over, but since role is equated with all that one 'is', one's identity is replaceable. One does not have a unique, irreplaceable identity.<sup>3</sup>

However, when the issue is death, there is no possibility of substitution. This thought is encapsulated in the famous statement:

No one can take the Other's dying away from him.<sup>4</sup>

Following on from this point logically, Heidegger would be expected to conclude that dying, as the one 'possibility' in which there could be no substitution, is what makes each Dasein unique, and brings it back from its lostness in the anonymous mass. But at this point he does not do that. Instead he argues that it is death which is individualised in

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 284/240.

<sup>2</sup>See BT, p. 283/239, where Heidegger uses the word 'vertreten' in the sense of 'deputising'.

<sup>3</sup>For a full discussion of the differences between representation and substitution cf. Dorothee Sölle, Christ the Representative (London: SCM Press, 1967), pp. 17ff.

<sup>4</sup>BT, p. 284/240. The sacrifice of one's life for another does not affect this claim, since the other must still die himself. In the context of Atonement theory, how then could Christ as an individual die for others? Cf. Chapter IV, p. 156.

each case by the existing Dasein. That is, at this stage of the argument, he maintains that the uniqueness of each man is given by the fact that no one else can exist for him. On that basis death is not simply a general phenomenon but is individualised:

Death is in each case mine, in so far as it 'is'  
at all .... mineness and existence are ontologically  
constitutive for death.<sup>1</sup>

His purpose at present is to establish that death must be considered existentially, as a way of Being of Dasein, if not the way. The importance of this method cannot be overemphasised. The uniqueness of Dasein in each case has already been firmly established without mention of death. Death is not introduced as something which could shatter that uniqueness, but as the way in which that uniqueness is revealed. Thus from the outset Heidegger has defended himself against the notion of death as that which threatens Dasein. To say that death is that which constitutes identity and confers uniqueness would allow it too much power. Death is to be seen in Heidegger's terms not as a threatening phenomenon external to Dasein, nor as an end to existence but as the way of existing. This is the thrust of Heidegger's argument, but as has been noted, many passages are ambiguous. Is it death which confers a unique identity on Dasein in each case, or does Dasein, whose identity is given by the capacity to ex-sist, individualise death, i.e. make it its own and no one else's?

Sartre has observed this ambiguity, and accuses Heidegger of presenting a circular argument. He claims that simply because no one else can die for me does not give dying a special position. None of my actions can be undertaken by anyone else, for no one else is 'me'.

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 284/240.



It is the uniqueness of 'myself' which confers uniqueness on my actions. But surely it is precisely the character and meaning of 'myself' which is under question? Sartre's response is that Heidegger presupposes a 'self' who exists when he declares that Dasein is always characterised by 'mineness'.<sup>1</sup> Thus death "becomes my death only if I place myself already in the perspective of subjectivity".<sup>2</sup> For Sartre this perspective is given by the 'pre-reflective cogito'. Thus Sartre removes the ambiguity concerning what constitutes identity, but perhaps too easily. He seems to have misinterpreted Heidegger's concept of 'mineness', by taking it in the sense of a 'given' subjectivity which is then the ground for the uniqueness of all Dasein's possibilities, including death. He has hypostasised 'mineness'.

It is precisely this concretising of 'mineness' that Heidegger rejects. He does not presuppose that 'I' and 'mine' have any meaning in themselves, but begins radically with Being-there, Da-sein. His starting point is ex-sistence; not that there are beings which exist, but simply there is the capacity to ex-sist. From that point he discovers that ex-sistence cannot be a shared activity. It necessarily individualises Dasein so that Dasein in each case determines its own character alone. 'Mineness' for Heidegger is simply an expression of this self-determination. The 'mineness' of Dasein cannot be separated from the dynamic process of ex-sisting.

It seems that Sartre does attempt to separate 'selfness' from ex-sistence, so that the 'selfness' or 'mineness' of Dasein is something different from the 'standing out towards possibilities'. If

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Sartre, BN, p. 534.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 535. Heywood Thomas in "Immortality and Humanism", The Modern Churchman, Dec. 1959, New Series, Vol.3, p. 33 uses a linguistic argument to

that distinction were true, it would of course follow that all of 'my' possibilities are 'mine'. But Heidegger will not permit this separation. There is no 'I' who 'stands out'. Dasein as 'standing out' is in each case 'I'. It is the performance of ex-sistence which gives 'mineness' its meaning.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Sartre's interpretation of Heidegger is rejected but the ambiguity remains. Is it death which confers uniqueness on each Dasein, or is it the 'mineness' of each Dasein which makes death its own? It can now be said that the question presents a false alternative, and that a complete view of Heidegger's position requires both sides of the ambiguity. There is a dialectic between the identity given by ex-sisting; and that given by the possibilities which are confronted. With his concepts of 'mineness' and 'existence', Heidegger has shown that the identity of Dasein is already found in reaching forward to one's own possibilities, and making them one's own, i.e. being responsible for them. His purpose is to establish that death must also be considered as a possibility of Dasein's Being. This is one pole of the dialectic.

The other pole is admitted when he says that "Death signifies a peculiar possibility-of-Being in which the very Being of one's own Dasein is an issue",<sup>2</sup> i.e. death has a peculiar role in forming Dasein's identity, but this is admitted only from the standpoint of the ex-sisting Dasein.

---

defend Heidegger against Sartre. He suggests that dying is different from all other actions in that the past tense can be used only metaphorically, i.e. "I have died", makes no sense literally. Heywood Thomas does not draw any clear conclusion from this argument, and it does not seem to take us any further.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Heidegger, The Essence of Reasons, p. 39. "In surpassing, Dasein attains to the Being that it is; what it attains to is its 'Self'. Transcendence [i.e. ex-sistence] constitutes selfhood."

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 284/240.



The two poles remain in an uneasy tension, which can be highlighted by asking a further question: Is the role of death to bring us to an awareness of our uniqueness, or does it have a further role constituting that uniqueness? In other words, if man did not die, could he in principle have a unique identity?

Some commentators have interpreted Heidegger as supporting the 'strong' role in which death makes Dasein who he is. Thus Vincent Vycinas states that:

Death is that which makes Dasein really Dasein, just as night makes day to stand out as day; ... death is the power which holds Dasein together.<sup>1</sup>

On this view the 'wholeness' of Dasein is conceivable only because of its death. Now Heidegger does suggest this, as we shall see in the next section on the meaning of death as 'end'; but he does not thereby admit that death has the power to create the identity of Dasein. The ambiguity of his position is retained more faithfully by Magda King in the concluding paragraph of her sensitive book:

Far from declaring man's Being to be meaningless because it is finite, Heidegger shows for the first time that an understanding of Being, and with it, an understanding of meaning and purpose, is only possible for a finite existence.<sup>2</sup>

Lest it should be imagined that she is arguing that man needs an end in order to be himself, she continues,

Man exists finitely, not because in fact he does not live for ever, but because to him a NOT is in advance revealed, and this harsh inexorable NOT alone has the revelatory power to enable him to understand Being and so bring him into the dignity and uniqueness of a finitely free existence.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Vincent Vycinas, Earth and Gods (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 55. For similar views cf. James Damske, Being, Man and Death (Kentucky: University Press, 1970), p. 25; "Death is an essential part, if not indeed, the culmination and crown of human life." Cf. also John Macquarrie, Martin Heidegger (London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 180.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



Magda King is arguing that it is not death itself which brings identity but the awareness in advance, the capacity of Dasein to reach forward to this uttermost possibility and anticipate it. But can Dasein maintain the 'wholeness' of its Being in anticipating death, and how is it possible for Dasein to be free in the face of this 'end'? With these questions we have returned to the point where the discussion on the role of death began. There still remains unresolved the dialectic between Dasein's free existence and its 'thrownness', exemplified by death. The way ahead taken by Heidegger to resolve the ambiguity is to redefine death.

#### An Existential Interpretation of Death

Heidegger has declared that death must be viewed existentially if it is to constitute the wholeness of Dasein. How then is Dasein's 'end' to be understood? Certainly not as that which puts a stop to life. The 'end', to be interpreted existentially, must be incorporated into the performance of ex-sistence. In explaining his meaning, Heidegger employs the analogy of the fruit which includes its 'end', i.e. its ripeness, in the ripening process. Ripeness is not something that happens to the fruit from outside itself. The 'not-yet' of the ripeness is involved in the becoming of the fruit. Similarly, Dasein, "as long as it is, is already its 'not-yet'".<sup>1</sup> Heidegger admits that the analogy breaks down on the question of fulfilment. The fruit is fulfilled when it is ripe but this cannot be said of Dasein. With Dasein's death, far from having "exhausted its specific possibilities", it is deprived of fulfilling further possibilities.<sup>2</sup> Dasein ends in unfulfilment.

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 288/244.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Heidegger could be expected to conclude that death as the 'end' disrupts identity, constituted as it is by possibility. But he concludes instead that fulfilment cannot belong to Dasein's Being. Fulfilment is a characteristic of beings other than Dasein.

What then is the meaning of Dasein's 'end', and how is Dasein related to it? Heidegger describes it as the "uttermost-not-yet" of Dasein.<sup>1</sup> It must not be seen as something external to existence but as the ground of existence. Here Heidegger introduces a crucial distinction:

The 'ending' which we have in view when we speak of death, does not signify Dasein's Being-at-an-end (Zu-Ende-sein), but a Being-towards-the-end (sein zum Ende) of this entity. Death is a way to be which Dasein takes over as soon as it is. 'As soon as man comes to life, he is at once old enough to die.'<sup>2</sup>

As a phenomenon which belongs to Dasein, "death is only as an existential Being-towards-death".<sup>3</sup> Heidegger's conclusion is that the 'end' towards which Dasein projects itself remains inappropriately defined by the notion of Being-at-an-end. The 'end' as an external event which will one day happen to Dasein reduces Dasein to the level of an object in the world.<sup>4</sup> Death is not to be understood as something which is still outstanding, something which will happen to Dasein only at the end.

The key to Heidegger's understanding of death is Dasein's character as 'ahead of self'. Because Dasein is ahead of itself it is able to include the uttermost 'not yet' of death into its Being. Indeed death can be considered in relation to Dasein only as it contributes to

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 253/250.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 289/245.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 277/254.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. BT, p. 293/250.

an understanding of Being-ahead-of-self. There are several points of importance here. In this section Heidegger states what has been implicit, namely that the primary mode of Dasein's Being is the 'ahead-of-self'. Within the threefold structure of ex-sistence, facticity, and fallenness, ex-sistence is primary. Thus he states:

The phenomenon of the 'not-yet' has been taken over from the ahead-of-itself; no more than the care structure in general can it serve as a higher court which would rule against the possibility of Being-a-whole. Indeed this 'ahead of itself' is what first makes such a Being-towards-the-end possible.<sup>1</sup>

Being-ahead-of-self is presented as the source of Dasein's unity and wholeness. This confirms what was suggested in the first chapter, that it is the capacity to ex-sist, or project ahead of self, which is the primary characteristic of Dasein, but in this section of Being and Time more is being claimed. Not only is Dasein's relation to the future primary, but it is also that orientation which integrates Dasein into a unified whole. It now becomes clear why Heidegger introduces the concept of death to the discussion. The structure of 'being-ahead-of-self' was laid down formally in the first part of Being and Time. It must now be shown how in practice Dasein can be ahead of itself, and be a unity. Heidegger argues that Dasein is authentically ahead-of-itself in relating to death. His approach to death is guided by the question of how the phenomenon reveals Dasein's character as ahead-of-itself. It is for that reason that death as a phenomenon external to Dasein must be discarded. Similarly any notion of death as the termination of Dasein's way of Being must be rejected, since it would not then impinge on its character as ahead-of-self.

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 303/259. My emphasis. Cf. BT, p. 279/236: "The primary item in 'care' is the 'ahead-of-itself'".



It could be asked, what is distinctive about death in revealing how Dasein is ahead of itself. Heidegger's answer has already been noted above. Death is the one phenomenon lying ahead which cannot be denied or passed on to someone else. It cannot be dismissed as something which will happen one day but has no relevance for existence now. Whether Dasein faces the possibility authentically, or attempts to deny it, death has a formative influence on the present moment. Indeed the meaning of the 'present moment' requires redefinition when it is considered in relation to death. This last point discloses Heidegger's ultimate intention in introducing the concept of death. Death is discussed not because it is of interest in itself but because it is the phenomenon which shows how a future possibility is closely related to the present. Heidegger's over-all purpose in Being and Time is to discover the ground for the unity or wholeness of Dasein. A consideration of Dasein's Being-towards-death provides access to the relation of Dasein to its future.

Having presented the conditions under which death is to be examined, i.e. as an existential phenomenon, Heidegger proceeds to the question of how Dasein can relate authentically to its own death, in practice.<sup>1</sup>

#### Advancing Towards Death

Authentic Being-towards-death is described as 'anticipation' of this possibility or, better, 'advancing' in this possibility.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>See BT, pp.304-311/200-267.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 306/262. 'Anticipation' is Macquarrie's translation of Vorlaufen. In this rendition there is the suggestion of actualising an event before it is due, which does not correspond with the root meaning of vorlaufen as 'running ahead'. The word is translated as

Heidegger is careful to state that this does not in any way mean that death as a possibility of Being is somehow actualised in advance. In fact; "the closeness which one may have in Being towards death as a possibility, is as far as possible from anything actual".<sup>1</sup> What does this mean? Surely that death is a possibility which is non-actualisable.<sup>2</sup> For Heidegger, the actualisation of a possibility destroys its character as possibility. Death, as a possibility of Being which cannot be actualised by Dasein, shows that Dasein cannot find its authentic existence in any actualised state at all. The relation to death therefore reveals that the focus of authentic existence lies in the future, but not in a future which, one day, will be the present. Authentic existence is found in 'advancing' towards death as the future which is no future, towards the "possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all".<sup>3</sup> This does not mean merely contemplating that 'impossibility', but 'running ahead' on ground which is no ground. This groundlessness is not a future event only but the foundation of Dasein, as it ex-sists.

'Advancing' thus confirms and elaborates what was laid down in Division I of Being and Time, that Dasein is itself in projecting towards its possibilities. The full meaning of Being itself is projecting towards death. But this also means that Dasein as individualised non-relational existence is confirmed. In advancing towards death,

---

'advancing' in this thesis, thus retaining the sense of movement in Dasein's relation to its end.

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 306/262.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus 6.4311 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 147: "Death is not an event in life. We do not live to experience death".

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 307/262.

Dasein is "wrenched away" from the anonymous mass to exist only for its self. The "non-relational character of death, as understood in advancing, individualises Dasein down to itself", and shows that all relations with others and with the world "fail us when our ownmost potentiality-for-Being is the issue". Dasein can be authentically itself only if it makes this possible for itself of its own accord.<sup>1</sup> The relation to death radically isolates Dasein in all its possibilities. Since death is the possibility by which all others are to be understood, the non-relational character of death is carried into all concrete possibilities that lie before death, i.e. the conclusion that authentic existence is non-relational can be read back into all of Dasein's possibilities. The implication Heidegger draws from this 'reading back' is that the "whole of Dasein can be taken in advance".<sup>2</sup>

Thus, by confirming the non-relational character of Dasein, death enables it to exist as a whole in advance. The conclusions which Heidegger makes in this section on death confirm the previous analysis in Division I where Dasein was characterised as Being-ahead-of-itself-for-the-sake-of-itself.

#### Freedom and Death

Heidegger associates 'advancing' with Dasein's freedom in the following ways:

- 1) In 'advancing' "one is free for one's own death";<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 308/263.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 309/264.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 308/264.



- 2) One is freed from everyday possibilities which obscure the ultimate ground for authentic existence:

Advancing discloses to existence that its uttermost possibility lies in giving itself up, and thus it shatters all one's tenaciousness to whatever existence one has reached.<sup>1</sup>

- 3) One is freed for the first time to choose authentically among the everyday possibilities making up existence. This is summarised in the well known passage:

Advancing reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather in an impassioned FREEDOM TOWARDS DEATH, a freedom which has been released from the Illusions of the 'they', and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Argument Thus Far

Heidegger's declared intention in the second Division of Being and Time is to show how Dasein can be conceived as a whole, given the three characteristics of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness. With the discussion on death he argues that in relating to its 'end' Dasein can be a whole even as it exists. This wholeness is conceivable only because Dasein has the capacity to 'be ahead of itself'. Death is interpreted in conformity with this structure, and in the process of analysis, the meaning of Being-ahead-of-self is also interpreted and taken further. Being-ahead-of-itself authentically means 'advancing' towards death in such a way that the future is not encapsulated in the 'present'. Instead the boundaries of the 'present' are expanded in relation to the 'end'. In relating to its future as death, Dasein is freed to choose authentically amongst present possibilities. For

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 308/264.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 311/266.

Heidegger death confirms Dasein's character as a "futural" being, and as one whose Being is radically isolated, or non-relational.<sup>1</sup> The notion of Dasein as 'futural' will be expanded shortly since it holds the final key to the unity of Being for Heidegger. Before that point one more step needs to be taken. Having analysed Being-towards-death Heidegger asks what connection there is between this analysis, and the ways that Dasein exists in fact. He has simply shown at this point that it is ontologically possible for Dasein to be a whole in relating to its death, but that demonstration is worthless unless he can go on to show that Dasein "does ever throw itself into such a Being-towards-death".<sup>2</sup> He must remove any suggestion that the wholeness of Dasein as 'advancing-towards-death' has been imposed "from outside", having no correspondence with the ways in which Dasein exists in practice.<sup>3</sup> Before even that question can be tackled, Heidegger first investigates, in Division II<sup>2</sup>, whether in any way Dasein shows that from within its own resources it can achieve authentic existence. Leaving aside for the moment whether Dasein can 'be' authentically towards death, can it authentically 'be' itself at all in a current situation? If he can establish that Dasein "demands" from within the realisation of selfhood in a current situation, then he has a phenomenal basis for the further question of whether an authentic Being-towards-death, and thereby 'wholeness' can be realised. The problem reserved for Division II<sup>3</sup> is the relation between being an authentic self in the current situation, and authentic Being-towards-death.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter it will be made

---

<sup>1</sup>For the concept of Dasein as 'futural', see BT, pp. 373/325; 437/385.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 311/266.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 311/267.

clear that these problems ultimately rest on the question of the relation of future, present and past in Dasein's existence.

### Dasein and the Current Situation

The tensions outlined in this chapter, have yet to be resolved. Heidegger has simply declared Dasein's 'freedom towards death' but has not shown how it can be worked out in the current situation. The analysis of death has confirmed Dasein's character as in some way 'futural', in which lies freedom. This could be seen as an attempt to deny facticity unless he can show how Being-towards-death relates to the present. Related to this problem is the other tension also unresolved, of an identity constituted both by ex-sistence and in some way by the possibility of death towards which Dasein ex-sists. Until the relation between these poles is satisfactorily explained Heidegger has not answered the fundamental problem of how Dasein can be free in the face of facticity. His solution is developed in Division II<sup>2</sup>.

The assumption is made that, despite the fact that for the most part it is lost in the anonymous mass, Dasein can by itself attain an authentic selfhood in the concrete situation. Heidegger finds in the phenomenon of conscience (Gewissenheit) that which 'calls' Dasein to be its 'self'.<sup>1</sup> The role of conscience is to let Dasein understand itself for what it is, and thus bring it to the point where it can 'choose' its self. The importance of conscience for Heidegger is that if it did not reveal the ways that Dasein can be in the current situation, Dasein could not be aware of what it truly 'is' and could not choose to be that self. It would remain ensnared in anonymity. Whereas Anxiety and death have the power to disclose Dasein's true character in relation

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp. 313/268 f.



to the future, conscience unveils Dasein to itself in the current situation. Conscience confronts Dasein, from within itself, with the 'thrownness' of its existence, that it is there and has not chosen its 'thereness'.<sup>1</sup>

As something thrown, Dasein has been thrown into existence. It exists as an entity which has to be as it is and as it can be.<sup>2</sup>

Conscience is a call which comes from Dasein itself, Dasein "which finds itself (sich befindest) in the very depths of its uncanniness".<sup>3</sup> Clearly the Dasein which calls must be distinguished from the Dasein which is called. The caller is the 'self' who is thrown into a non-relational individualised existence, who cannot escape being identified by the 'Not' ahead of it. Richardson remarks that the caller has almost an otherness for Dasein "which however does not come from an other Dasein but out of Dasein's own depths".<sup>4</sup> The call is a summons to Dasein in the fallenness of its everyday self where it "makes no choices, yet is carried along by the nobody, and thus ensnares itself in in-authenticity".<sup>5</sup>

In the summons Dasein is called to be its ownmost potentiality for Being its self, and thus is disclosed as "Being-guilty".<sup>6</sup> "Guilt"

<sup>1</sup>BT, pp. 315/270 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 321/276.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>W.J. Richardson, op. cit., p. 80. Cf. BT, p. 320/275: "The call comes from me and yet from beyond me". The caller is simply Dasein in the brief moments when it glimpses the dread-ful nothingness ahead of it. In particular Heidegger mentions that God should not be considered to be the source of the call. Even though the call comes from 'beyond' Dasein, it must be analysed existentially, i.e. as a phenomenon of Dasein.

<sup>5</sup>BT, p. 312/268.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 314/269. Cf. paragraph 58, pp. 325/280 ff.

is associated with the everyday usage of the word 'conscience', but Heidegger uses "Guilt" differently. Through a survey of commonsense meanings, he arrives at an existential interpretation which accords with Dasein's character. In Richardson's words, the "common denominator" of these meanings is the 'lack' or 'absence' of "what can and should be".<sup>1</sup> In the context of relationships with others Dasein is guilty when it is responsible for the 'lack' of something in an other.<sup>2</sup> However, since the concern is with Dasein's authentic, non-relational 'self', the relationships to others are insignificant, leaving the conclusion that in Being-guilty, Dasein is responsible for a 'lack' in itself. Heidegger takes care to emphasise that 'lack' when applied to Dasein does not suggest the absence of some characteristic from Dasein which could be supplied to complete it. In this sense there can be nothing lacking in Dasein, "not because it would then be perfect, but because its character remains distinct from any presence-at-hand".<sup>3</sup> In Richardson's words there can be no 'lack' in Dasein "which already is what it can be, i.e. its own potentiality".<sup>4</sup>

Dasein is 'guilty', not in the sense of being responsible for the 'lack' of some characteristic in its Being, but in being responsible for the lack of a basis for its whole Being.

The self, which as such has to lay the basis for itself, can never get that basis into its power; and yet, as existing, it must take over Being-a-basis.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 328/282.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 329/283.

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>5</sup>BT, p. 330/284.

Dasein's guilt arises from the tension, noted frequently in this chapter, between ex-sistence and 'thrownness'. In accordance with its character as ex-sistence, Dasein must be responsible for determining its own Being. In other words as an ex-sisting Being it must 'be' its own foundation. Yet ex-sistence is not chosen by Dasein, it is thrown into ex-sisting. It cannot therefore be the ground of its own Being. Its Being is grounded not in ex-sistence, but in the 'not' ahead. Dasein is guilty in that, summoned by conscience to be its own foundation, it cannot fulfil the demand, for it can never 'get behind' its 'thrownness'.<sup>1</sup> This guilt is inescapable for Dasein, because it is rooted in the very structure of its Being.

The question arises as to how authentic existence is possible at all, if existence is surrounded, and determined by 'thrownness'. Heidegger's answer is that the way to authenticity is to be authentically guilty.<sup>2</sup> The call of conscience brings Dasein to this understanding. By confronting Dasein with its thrownness, conscience leads it to accept its Being-guilty. Dasein thus takes over its guilt; it chooses to accept its inevitable ontological guilt, and thus chooses itself in its existence and 'thrownness'. In choosing to own its guilt, it chooses itself.<sup>3</sup> Heidegger emphasises that conscience itself cannot be chosen for that would allow existence to get behind 'thrownness' in some way. The only choice before Dasein is to accept or attempt to deny its own 'null' basis.<sup>4</sup> Conscience calls Dasein to 'be' its 'self', and that

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 330/284: "As existent, it never comes back behind its thrownness in such a way that it might first release this 'that-it-is-and-has-to-be' from its Being-its-self and lead it into the 'there'".

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 333/287.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 334/287.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



'self' is now concretised in the current situation as 'Being-guilty'.

In Heidegger's words, Dasein's Being "means as thrown projection, Being the basis of a nullity (and this Being-the-basis is itself null)".<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the tortuous language, this definition provides Heidegger's answer to the problem of freedom and 'thrownness'. The point is that any notion of freedom as an escape from the bounds of 'thrownness' must be abandoned. Instead of talking of freedom or facticity, we should talk of freedom in and through facticity. There is no freely existing 'self' threatened by facticity, the fact that Dasein is given over to the way it has to be. As an existent being Dasein can never get behind the fact that it 'is'. It is not the foundation of its self. And yet the existing 'self' is not merely a product of the fact that it is and has to be. The ex-sisting Dasein must take over and 'be' its own foundation. How is this possible? By projecting itself upon possibilities which have been forced upon it in its thrownness. As Being-a-'self', Dasein has been released from the 'not' which is its ontological basis in order to take hold of that basis and to 'be' it.<sup>2</sup> That is, there is no 'self' which releases Dasein. It is "released from its basis, not through itself, but to itself, so as to be as this basis".<sup>3</sup> Thus there is no room for a 'self' who then projects its own foundation. The foundation is given, and, if Dasein is being authentically its self, it takes this over and is responsible for it. Dasein's freedom is not to be found in the struggle of a 'self' to overcome 'thrownness'. Instead, Dasein is free

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 331/285.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 330/285.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

in its capacity to be its own incapacity.

The call is heard correctly when Dasein lets itself be called forth to its ownmost 'Being-guilty', i.e. when it projects itself towards the null basis of its Being, the projection itself being null.<sup>1</sup> In this projection Dasein owns its 'self'. This authentic selfhood in the current situation Heidegger designates as 'Resoluteness' (Entschlossenheit). Resoluteness, that authentic response to the call of conscience, is defined as a "reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty in which one is ready for anxiety".<sup>2</sup>

Resoluteness involves a decision. Dasein chooses to exist as Being-guilty. It chooses to 'be' its own 'null' foundation in the present situation, i.e. to grasp its own emptiness. In that decision, according to Heidegger lies freedom.<sup>3</sup> It should be emphasised that 'freedom' in no way implies that in deciding Dasein puts the determined past behind, and chooses in an existentially open future. The freedom of resoluteness is a taking over of the past, of what Dasein already was.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 331/285.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 343/297.

<sup>3</sup>The word Entschlossenheit is ambiguous, since it can be translated both as 'Resolve' meaning 'decision'; or 'Resoluteness' suggesting determined action in the face of all opposition. Most commentators emphasise the first sense. Thus Richardson: "Resolve is fundamentally a choice that could be refused .... The choice consists in choosing to be what conscience lets Dasein see that it is, i.e. finite.... This choosing that is Resolve is profoundly an act of freedom". Op. cit., p. 189. Cf. Michael Gelven, op. cit., p. 170, "To be authentic means to be resolute, to be free to choose one's own manner of existence". These interpretations are misleading since they suggest that in deciding, Dasein frees itself from the grip of 'thrownness'. The other aspect of Resolve, a silent acceptance of existential guilt, corrects that impression.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. BT, p. 373/325.

In accepting the 'givenness' of its existence Dasein is freed to see the 'present' situation in its reality, simply as an opportunity for the expression of authentic selfhood.

To recall the purpose of this section, Heidegger is concerned with the way in which Dasein can be its 'self' in the concrete situation, whereas the previous section dealt with Dasein's Being-a-whole in 'advancing' towards death. The final task, if he is to demonstrate the united character of Dasein, is to prove a genuine connection between 'resoluteness' and 'advancing'. In Heidegger's words "what can death and the concrete situation of taking action have in common?"<sup>1</sup> He has argued that in being resolute Dasein can own its self, but can resoluteness extend to the whole of Dasein's existence including Being-towards-death? Heidegger's answer is that resoluteness must be thought through to the end:

What if Resoluteness ... should bring itself into authenticity only when it projects itself not upon any random possibilities which just lie closest, but upon that uttermost possibility which lies ahead of every factual potentiality-for-Being of Dasein, and as such enters more or less disguisedly into every potentiality-for-Being of which Dasein factically takes hold? What if it is only in the anticipation of death that resoluteness, as Dasein's authentic truth, has reached the authentic certainty which belongs to it?<sup>2</sup>

In other words, resoluteness does not merely have a connection with advancing-towards-death, but is only fully itself in projecting resolutely towards its end. It has been shown that Dasein is authentically its self, i.e. resolute, when it exists as the 'thrown' basis of itself. It can take over in its existence "the fact that it is the null basis of its own nullity". Now it is confirmed that the 'nullity' is not

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 349/302.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 350/302.



fully understood as a present factual nullity but has its ground in death as "the utter nullity of Dasein".<sup>1</sup> Thus Dasein is authentically its self as advancing resoluteness, as freely ex-sisting towards the uttermost nullity of death which is the ground of its Being-guilty in every concrete situation. Death, or more precisely Being-towards-death, has been brought into Dasein's current situation by being the basis of every factual possibility of which Dasein can take hold.

With this linking of Dasein's projection in the current situation, and death as the ground of every possibility in that situation, the full meaning of freedom in 'thrownness' is disclosed, and with it Heidegger's resolution of the dialectic between 'mineness' and death. Dasein's freedom lies in the capacity to 'be' what it already is, and 'what it already is', is revealed most surely by death. The solution to the dialectic is that death does constitute Dasein's identity, but that death becomes the possibility of Dasein only when the ex-sisting Dasein, which alone is responsible for its Being, decides to project towards this uttermost possibility.

#### Temporality and the Wholeness of Dasein

It should be recalled that in Division II of Being and Time Heidegger is concerned with how Dasein's wholeness can be shown, and how it can exist authentically.<sup>2</sup> The concept of death was introduced to the analysis as a way to solve these problems, and with the disclosure of 'advancing resoluteness' as Dasein's way of being wholly authentic, the solution is within his grasp. One final step must be

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 354/306.

<sup>2</sup>See above, p. 53.

taken. 'Advancing resoluteness' must be interpreted to discover the ontological ground which unites it.<sup>1</sup> With 'advancing resoluteness', the ontological ground of Dasein's unity is finally shown to lie in the unity of time. By arguing that 'advancing' is not simply connected with resoluteness, but that resoluteness in a current situation is grounded in advancing-towards-death, Heidegger has demonstrated that the future is the ground of the existential reality of the present. The ultimate value of the analysis of death is to indicate that past, present and future are not separated, but intimately related to each other, and that this unity of time is bound up with the unity of Dasein, providing the basis for its wholeness. This unity of time is worked out as follows.

First, Dasein's character as Being-ahead-of-itself, which is authentically expressed as 'advancing resoluteness', is possible only because Dasein can "let itself come towards itself".<sup>2</sup> This indicates that Dasein is "futural".<sup>3</sup> In other words, it is characteristic of Dasein that it is always ahead, coming towards itself from the future. In advancing-towards-death, Dasein's ownmost potentiality-for-Being comes towards it; it is "authentically futural".<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, 'thrownness' always belongs to Dasein's Being. In 'advancing resoluteness' Dasein exists authentically as its 'thrownness'. It accepts its 'Being-guilty', and therefore accepts itself "as it

<sup>1</sup>BT, paragraph 63, p. 358/311.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 372/325.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 373/325: "By the term 'futural' we do not have in view a 'now' which has not yet become 'actual', and which sometime will be for the first time. We have in view the coming (Kunft) in which Dasein ... comes towards itself".

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

already was".<sup>1</sup> It takes up its past into its existence. But 'being' its past is only possible if the past is finally rooted in the future. There could be no connection between 'futural' Dasein and its past unless that past arises from the future. Thus being "as it already was" does not, for Heidegger, mean being trapped by a 'closed' past. Dasein 'is' its past authentically only as it is taken over by its future.

Thirdly, Dasein is authentically present as 'advancing resoluteness' not by isolating a 'now' from past and future, but by "waiting-towards" the future.<sup>2</sup> Being 'present' authentically is very different from being present in time. When resolute, Dasein is authentically 'there' in a "moment of vision", in which the 'present' is seen as the concretising or "temporalising" of the "authentic future".<sup>3</sup> Thus Dasein's 'present' as well as its 'past' emerges from its 'future'. In its character as futural, Dasein continually "comes back" to itself, resolutely bringing itself into the current situation by "making present". Thus the three dimensions of time are not separate:

The character of 'having been' arises from the future, and in such a way that the future which 'has been' (or better which 'is in the process of having been') releases from itself the present.<sup>4</sup>

This unity of future, having been and the present is designated by Heidegger as 'temporality'. The search for the ground of Dasein's wholeness and authenticity is at an end. "Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care."<sup>5</sup> Only as temporality can the Being

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 373/325.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 387/338.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 388/338. For "moment of vision" cf. BT, pp. 376/328; 437/385.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 374/326.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



of Dasein finally be understood. Heidegger's aim in Being and Time, to interpret "time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being" has been achieved.<sup>1</sup>

Although temporality is a unity, within its structure a certain bias prevails. The present is secondary over against the future and the past. It is authentic only as it is created by them. If the present is detached from future and past, as an isolated moment, it makes Dasein inauthentic and thus gives rise to falling, which is therefore also grounded in temporality.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, if the present is secondary to past and future, the future has priority over its 'having been':

Primordial and authentic temporality temporalises itself in terms of the authentic future and in such a way that in having been futurally, it first of all awakens the Present. The primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the future.<sup>3</sup>

This future must not be assumed to stretch forward endlessly. The future forming the structure of temporality is finite.

The ecstatic character of the primordial future lies precisely in the fact that the future closes one's potentiality-for-Being; that is to say the future itself is closed to one, and as such it makes possible the resolute existentiell understanding of nullity.<sup>4</sup>

Unless the future is finite, Dasein could not be resolute. This is not to deny that time may go on "in spite of my no-longer-Dasein",<sup>5</sup> but this

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 19/1.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BT, p. 376/328. This point is also made by Helmut Dopffel, The Concept of Death in Heidegger's 'Being and Time', unpublished M.Th. Thesis (Edinburgh, New College, 1976), p. 51.

<sup>3</sup>BT, p. 378/329.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 379/330.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 378/330.

is not authentic temporality, which is always related to Dasein as it exists finitely. Indeed, Heidegger argues that the concept of infinite time is derived from 'primordial' time, which is finite.<sup>1</sup>

Heidegger's task is almost completed. The rest of Being and Time is taken up with going over the previous analysis of Dasein in its everyday inauthenticity to show that throughout its existence the ground of all its ways of Being lies in temporality. For the purposes of this thesis, no further comment is necessary, since in the last three chapters of the book, no additional contribution is made to Heidegger's notion of personal identity.

#### Summary

In the above analysis it has been shown that for Heidegger each man is unique by virtue of his capacity to ex-sist, to project towards his own possibilities of Being. This capacity is no property of some pre-existing self but is simply that which characterises the Being of man. However, the possibilities towards which existence projects enables an 'owned' self to be achieved. In particular, death has the power to individualise existence in a way that no other phenomenon can, for it reveals the ultimate non-relational character of existence.

---

<sup>1</sup>The implication of this conclusion for the concept of eternity does not go unnoticed. If the meaning of Being can be understood only within a horizon of temporality, then God's eternity must share this temporal character. This means that traditional notions of eternity suggesting constant presence in a timeless 'now', or everlasting time, must be abandoned, since they are based on an ordinary way of interpreting time. But is any concept of eternity compatible with temporality since temporality is declared to be finite, and eternity surely implies 'infinite' time in some sense. The concept is still viable if God's 'infinity' can be understood temporally; i.e. maintaining the interrelatedness of past, present and future. It would have to be argued that underlying Dasein's finite temporality is a "more primordial temporality which is 'infinite'". (BT, p. 499 n. xiii.)



In relating to death, each man is irreplaceable. By establishing a relationship between death and the present situation, Heidegger is able to show that man's identity as an ex-sisting being is not achieved over against the 'givenness' or 'thrownness' of his existence, i.e. the fact that he is as he is. Authentic selfhood comes in choosing to accept his 'thrownness' and, in that choice to be what he already is, each man is free for the present situation. The final step in the argument is to show that the ground of selfhood lies in the nature of time itself. The present is the concretion of the future and the past, from which it is released. Therefore, there is no 'self' which is 'present' at a given moment. The 'present moment' itself is real only as the presence of the future and 'having been', in the resoluteness of Dasein. Only as the concretising of future and past can a 'self' be said to be present at all.

### Criticism

The coherence of Heidegger's concept of personal identity rests on one argument, that man is freed to be himself in choosing to accept the way that he is. As was mentioned in Chapter I<sup>1</sup> he wishes to avoid the conclusion that man is bound by what he already is, by his past. Rather, he hopes to show that man 'is' what he will become. Having isolated the three dimensions of ex-sistence, facticity and fallenness, his task was to demonstrate their unity. This was achieved by asserting the primacy in Dasein of the capacity to ex-sist, grounded temporally in a primacy of the future; man's identity and his freedom are given in relation to his future. By choosing its 'thrownness' the ex-sisting Dasein pulls the whole of its Being, including its 'having been' into the open future where it decides freely about its Being. 'Thrownness' can be taken over precisely because it is characteristic of Dasein's past,

---

<sup>1</sup>See above, pp. 19ff.



which can be taken up into the open future of ex-sisting Dasein.<sup>1</sup> Thus Heidegger can say that Dasein is "constantly 'more' than it factually is", yet never, "more than it factically is".<sup>2</sup> In other words man is not defined by what he already is in fact, but he is defined and limited by facticity. Heidegger can say this without jeopardising the freedom of Dasein, because of Dasein's capacity to 'own' its facticity, from the standpoint of existence. Facticity is not a threat to the freedom of Dasein because it is embraced by Dasein's capacity to ex-sist, and therefore brought into the open future.

The clearest challenge to the coherence of this theory lies in the phenomenon of death, for here is an aspect of man's future which far from being the source of man's freedom, seems to be the end of all freedom. As was shown above, Heidegger's solution was to 'existentialise' death, to reinterpret 'death' as 'dying', or in Heidegger's own language, to interpret 'Being-at-the-end' as 'Being-towards-the-end'.<sup>3</sup> It is not denied that death is an aspect of Dasein's 'thrownness', i.e. death as the end is not chosen, but this 'thrownness' is admitted only within the framework of Dasein's capacity to ex-sist. By 'being' its own 'thrownness', by letting death become powerful in itself in 'advancing' towards it,

Dasein understands itself in its own superior power, the power of its finite freedom, so that in this freedom which 'is' only in it having chosen to make such a choice, it can take over the powerlessness of abandonment to its having done so.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Dopffel, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>2</sup>BT, p. 185/145.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 289/245.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 436/384.

At this point the critical question must be asked, whether the power of death is stronger than Heidegger admits. Death is shown to serve Dasein only if it is reducible completely to 'dying', but is there not an irreducible element to death, a power which cannot be encompassed by existence, even if the power of existence lies in powerlessness? Against the view that death itself is the final decision, the act which consummates human life,<sup>1</sup> is not death as the 'end' completely beyond the power of existence. It cannot be performed by Dasein. It does not even 'happen' to Dasein, for the term 'Dasein' refers only to existence. The concept of 'dead Dasein' is self-contradictory.<sup>2</sup> Far from being the phenomenon which supports and integrates Dasein, death is surely not a phenomenon of existence at all. It is not a 'possibility' of Dasein, not even the "possibility of the impossibility of existence", but a negation of all possibilities. It cannot be drawn into existence but has the power to destroy it.

These issues seem to demand examination, and yet from Heidegger's viewpoint they do not affect his project, for they treat death in a way which is inappropriate for Dasein. The phenomena which characterise Dasein can be approached only as they illuminate the capacity to ex-sist. Considering death as a 'brute fact' beyond existence is to treat Dasein in the same ontological category as objects present-at-hand.

However, within Heidegger's own thought structure these same questions can still be pursued, for it seems that existential

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Eberhard Jungel, Death, the Riddle and the Mystery (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1975), p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BT, p. 280/237 ff. where the ambiguity of Heidegger's position is indicated with the problem of the ontological status of "no-longer-Dasein". He is not content to conclude that in death, Dasein

Being-towards-the-end is dependent for its meaning on Being-at-the-end. As opposed to Heidegger whose argument is that death as 'end' is significant for Dasein only from the perspective of ex-sistence, it is proposed here that the existential concept of Being-towards-the-end can arise only because there is death as the 'end'.<sup>1</sup> Heidegger's attempt to interpret death entirely as 'dying' cannot be justified, for the latter notion is dependent on the former. Heidegger himself to some extent acknowledges the distinction when he talks of death as 'pure', i.e. unrealisable, possibility, but this admission is always from the standpoint of Dasein ex-sisting in freedom. But if death as end is to be distinguished from dying, it remains as one phenomenon which cannot be encompassed by ex-sistence, nor strictly speaking can it be touched by it. In this case, death poses a threat to the success of Heidegger's whole project which depends on viewing death as a dimension of existence. Death as end cannot be taken over by existence, for it lies completely beyond its grasp. Dasein cannot exist as its end. This means that Being-at-the-end must be understood as an element of Dasein's 'thrownness' rather than the capacity to ex-sist.<sup>2</sup> The significance of this conclusion must be emphasised. Heidegger allows that 'thrownness' is an aspect of Dasein, but 'thrownness' does not disrupt freedom since it can be chosen by the ex-sisting Dasein and, in that way, mastered. The unique characteristic of death is that it lies beyond all choice, and ends all choosing. It has the character of 'pure thrownness',

---

is a mere 'thing'; it is "no-longer Dasein", but even that characterisation is significant only for those who remain in-the-world. It would seem to follow that for that existing Dasein itself, its own death is completely inaccessible to it, but Heidegger does not take this view.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. H. Dopffel, op. cit. p. 63. The arguments presented on death as 'end' are considerably influenced by Dopffel's comments.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Dopffel, op. cit., p. 65.



untouched by existence. Thus it stands as an insurmountable threat to the coherence of Dasein's identity, which depends on the possibility of being a united whole. Such wholeness is not attainable by the existing Dasein, when death is beyond its reach.

This power of death to destroy Dasein's identity lies not solely in its character as 'pure thrownness' but because it is also a phenomenon of the future. The unity of Dasein was shown to be grounded ultimately in temporality; the freedom to 'be' its past and present was released from the horizon of the future. The disclosure of death as future thrownness<sup>1</sup> requires a re-examination of the coherence of Heidegger's interpretation of temporality and therefore of personal identity, for the function of the future is not as Heidegger understands it. His thesis depends partly on showing that Dasein can be freed from the grip of the factual, freed to take up 'thrownness' as a being which 'is' its own empty ground. This freedom was dependent on an 'open' future of possibilities, from which Dasein could embrace its past 'thrownness'. With the disclosure of death as future 'thrownness', it appears that the future considered existentially, is no different from the past. Heidegger's 'future' cannot take the burden of freedom laid upon it, for it is too like the 'trapped' past.

In this case Dasein's identity is constituted as much by its past as by the future. The choice made by Dasein in resoluteness is the choice of a being which can be no more than it already is.<sup>2</sup> Dasein is surrounded and encapsulated by 'thrownness'. Referring back to the

---

<sup>1</sup>Dopffel, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rudolph Bultmann, Existence and Faith, translated by Schubert Ogden (London: Fontana Library, 1964), p. 128: "In every actual choice in which man chooses a possibility of existing authentically he in fact always chooses what he already is--thus he never gets rid of his past and therefore is never free. For this reason, however, he is also

discussion on 'mineness' and death, in which Sartre claimed that Heidegger operates with a pre-supposed 'self' it must be concluded that Sartre has caught the true implication of Heidegger's thought, but not the intention. The only significant difference between the two on this question is that whereas for Sartre selfhood is given by the 'pre-reflective cogito', for Heidegger the actual 'decidings' of Dasein coincide with selfhood. But whether or not there is a 'self' lying behind the 'deciding' does not alter the implication that the 'authentic' self is constituted by its past, by what it already is.

This conclusion announces the failure of Heidegger's project to understand man in relation to his future. The extent of this failure must be appreciated. By defining man entirely by his relation to the future, Heidegger has expressed his vulnerability. The disclosure of death as 'future thrownness' leads to the conclusion, not that man has a non-relational, or self-relational identity, but that he has no identity at all. He has a non-identity! Death, as the horizon which ends all possibilities, destroys the identity now of a being which is defined solely by its possibilities.

What way forward can there be if we wish to retain an 'ecstatic' view of identity, i.e. one which seeks the focus for personal uniqueness beyond the boundaries of man as he appears? One solution is to modify our understanding of the relation of ex-sistence to 'thrownness', so that death as end is not something alien to Dasein but a part of its Being. This is the approach taken by Dopffel:

---

never genuinely historical insofar as historicity means the possibility of an actual, i.e. a new occurrence."

Dasein is existence, but it is not pure existence. Existence is necessarily and thoroughly determined and limited by its thrownness. It has not laid its own ground, nor will it perform its own end, nor has it chosen either of them. But these limits belong nevertheless essentially to existence and are by no means alien to it, since they make existence possible at all.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to death, this means that Dasein must abstain from any attempt to perform its own death, since this is not in its power. It can die only as it acknowledges that this is not its ability, but nevertheless its Being. As Dasein comes to death, it does not disappear but 'is' in its death. "And in death the Being of Dasein is whole. So it is not nothing but its whole Being. Dasein is dead."<sup>2</sup> This is so because 'pure thrownness' is seen not as a threat to Dasein's Being but a dimension of it. The conclusion of this line of argument is that, if death is conceived as a mode of the Being of Dasein and not its extinction, then the Being of Dasein is eternal, or at least is capable of 'eternal death'. Dopffel argues that only on this basis is the ontological possibility of eternal life opened up:

If theology wants to speak of eternal life, it must develop an understanding of man's Being as eternal, which presupposes a concept of death as a mode of Dasein's Being. Now only is sensible discourse on eternal life possible. If death were to extinguish the Being of Dasein, then man would have to be created anew for eternal life--and I cannot but call this a man altogether different from historical man, who is mortal man. Only man who is capable of death and therefore is in death, can be eternally alive, because his ontological identity is preserved through death.<sup>3</sup>

On this argument death is to be accepted as a condition of man being himself. Only on the basis of that analysis of man can theological

---

<sup>1</sup>Dopffel, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 74.



assertions about eternal life be made. Methodologically, this procedure accords with Heidegger's own.<sup>1</sup> The point is crucial, and the theological implications must be made clear.

1) If the Being of man is defined without reference to God, the existence of God can in no way affect man's Being. As Bultmann comments, "all that he [Heidegger] would say is that his analysis exhibits the condition of the possibility that a man can comport himself faithfully or unfaithfully".<sup>2</sup> Bultmann himself accepts Heidegger's analysis of man's existence as the ontological ground for his theological comments, and argues that any theological concepts have a content that could be "determined ontologically prior to faith and in a purely rational way".<sup>3</sup> In general for Bultmann, theology can make fruitful use of a "philosophical" analysis of human existence, "for the man of faith is in any case a man".<sup>4</sup> What happens in Christian "rebirth" is not a "magical transformation that removes the man of faith from his humanity".<sup>5</sup>

In asserting an ontological continuity between the 'natural' man and the man of faith there is a laudable concern to affirm the full humanity of man in relationship with God. The implication however is

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Heidegger, The Essence of Reasons, p. 91. "The ontological interpretation of Dasein as Being-in-the-world tells neither for or against the possible existence of God. One must first gain an adequate concept of Dasein by illuminating transcendence. Then, by considering Dasein, one can ask how the relationship of Dasein to God is ontologically constituted."

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 108.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

that the existence of God fails to affect the Being of man as Being-towards-death. The definition of man is complete without reference to God. The grace of God could not create in man a 'new Being' if Being-towards-death has been defined as man's wholeness. This 'new Being' would be something other than a man; a sort of super man.

2) As Dopffel concludes, man is eternal, but is "distinguished from God by his limits".<sup>1</sup> In other words, death is one of the limits without which man would cease to be man. With this premise, it has to be concluded that death is part of God's intention for man, and for the rest of creation, for which He should be praised. The denial of death would be an attempt to be something more than man. God's ultimate intention for man is to be mortal.

3) Any theological concept of eternal life would still retain a non-relational concept of personal identity since, as Heidegger has shown, Being-towards-death is inevitably isolated. This position maintains that man is whole in relating only to his own death.

Even if these theological implications are acceptable one phenomenon challenges the view that man's wholeness lies in accepting death, namely the phenomenon of love. The concept of love cannot simply be added to Heidegger's analysis, for as an essentially relational phenomenon it is incompatible with a non-relational existence. If Heidegger's analysis is accepted, it must be concluded that love is not an ontological phenomenon, i.e. a dimension of man's Being.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 113, who declares that he can give a "clear conceptual statement of what 'love' means in a Christian sense only on the basis of the 'care' structure of man's nature". But he has to deny that love is an ontological phenomenon, i.e. one concerned with man's Being. It is merely an ontic modification of the primary structure of care. Cf. Bultmann, p. 121; "Heidegger speaks as an ontologist and therefore has neither the occasion nor the right to speak of love". See also Bultmann, p. 361 note 16.

Yet can love be dismissed so easily? As an undeniably relational phenomenon, it is in no way enhanced or disclosed by death. At the very least, its existence leads us to question whether Heidegger has indeed arrived at an adequate view of the wholeness of man. Can love simply be ignored in the ontological inquiry when it appears to have as deep a connection with man's desire to go beyond himself as does his projection towards the future?

At this stage of the thesis no reasons have been given for rejecting Being-towards-death as a definition of man's wholeness, except for the observation that in this system the phenomenon of love is an anomaly. At this point it is sufficient for our purposes to note that, if love is to be considered as an ontological phenomenon, i.e. as that which constitutes man's Being, then far more is implied than that it be somehow added to Heidegger's anthropology. Indeed a radical reformation of what it is to be man would be required. Heidegger has shown clearly that his concept of a non-relational identity is inseparable from an understanding of 'world' and 'time'. If it can be shown that man becomes himself in relating to what is other than himself, then a reinterpretation of Being-in-the-world and the character of the future would be necessary.<sup>1</sup> Death would have to be rejected as a condition of the world, and man being himself. As Heidegger has demonstrated, Being-towards-death implies a non-relational identity for man. If a relational identity is an ontological possibility, then the understanding of man as Being-towards-death would have to be rejected, i.e. it would have to be argued that man-towards-death is not 'man' at all.

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 112, where he argues that he can clarify conceptually what Christian eschatology is only when he knows in general what 'future' can mean for man through Heidegger's analysis.



How this rejection of the power of death could be formulated without denying its reality remains unclear at this stage. Could it be that, in the face of death, Dasein would exist authentically, not by accepting the end resolutely but by resisting in all his weakness its power to annihilate his Being. In this case the power of death would remain, but there would be no pretence that wholeness could be achieved in the face of it. Indeed, since death has been shown to be 'pure thrownness', the refusal to accept death as a condition of identity would mean the refusal to accept 'thrownness' in any form. Logically, this would mean refusing the facticity of the past as well as the future.<sup>1</sup>

In effect a reversal of Heidegger's project to find man's wholeness in a unity of 'ex-sistence', 'facticity' and 'falling' would be required. The freedom to be oneself would lie in refusing rather than accepting facticity. The individualised, non-relational identity would not then be the expression of freedom, but of man's non-identity. Only if a way through the power of death could be found would that 'non-identity' be overcome. It should be clear that such a way through death would not apply only to man's existential state, leaving unchanged the structures of the world, for Heidegger has demonstrated the inter-relatedness of identity and 'world'. However incredible it might appear, however much a denial of what cannot be denied, an alternative relational

---

<sup>1</sup>It would seem that the facticity of birth also presents a threat to identity based on relation, for "as soon as man comes to life, he is at once old enough to die". (BT, p. 289/245) A freedom from the facticity of the future requires also a freedom from the facticity of the past--indeed any feature of existence which compels man to 'be' as he is. This thought will be taken further in Chapter V, but it should be noted here that talk of freedom from the past is not meant to suggest a pretence that it never happened, or that it can somehow be obliterated. Heidegger's analysis has shown that the past, or future (death) cannot be ignored. Its power to constitute identity may be refused, but its reality cannot be denied.

identity would seem to imply that the 'natural' world also must be freed from the grip of death in order to 'be' itself.

However difficult it is to accept these conclusions, they seem to follow if it can be shown that man is himself in relation to what is other than himself. The next chapter is taken up with that claim represented in this thesis by the work of Martin Buber.

### CHAPTER III

#### MARTIN BUBER'S CONCEPT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

At the beginning of the last chapter, attention was directed to the problem of the wholeness of man in the face of death. The intimate link between wholeness and death was explored. Dasein could in each case be a whole because an 'end' was in view, and because that 'end' could be understood existentially as Being-towards-the-end. Death had an integrating function in the here and now existence of man, but not in the sense that a man's death could somehow be brought forward into the present situation. The reverse was true. Because the 'end' provided a temporal 'horizon' for man, he was freed from encapsulation in the present moment, in order to stand out in his destiny as a 'futural' being. In other words he is one whose wholeness comes not from the integrating capacity of the 'ego' to gather separate 'nows' into a whole existence. Rather, wholeness for man is a possibility only because of his relationship to 'temporality' itself, which for Heidegger is an ecstatic unity of past, present and future.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the 'end' could bring wholeness to man because it was the 'primordial' phenomenon of temporality, i.e. that phenomenon which enabled man to be temporal and thus in Heidegger's terms to 'be' at all. For man to exist authentically in a current situation meant, not to experience the present moment as an instant in a succession from past to future, but from the horizon of the ecstatic unity of past, present and future, to be resolute. And for Heidegger to be resolute was to be an authentic (owned) self.

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 377/329.



In this way wholeness, temporality and personal identity were closely linked, and it was clear that if the wholeness of temporality could not be defended, then Heidegger's notion of selfhood also collapsed. The argument of the last chapter was that wholeness could not be maintained since death which was supposed to have an integrating function, could not be domesticated. It could crush rather than constitute the wholeness of man.

This leaves a dilemma. Heidegger has shown convincingly that the question of who I am must be given in terms of temporality. A man is defined by the relation to death, as that phenomenon which reveals most clearly the character of the future. Personal identity is a function of the future; yet the future as death shatters identity in the present. Are we then left with a self-contradictory being who is destroyed by the very future which defines him?

The possibility of finding an identity which acknowledges the dimension of temporality without succumbing to its annihilating power forms the guiding problem for the final section of this thesis. For that task to proceed, a critical stance must be developed over against Heidegger's view of identity, and such is the purpose of this section.

It has been shown that Being-towards-death and an individualised, non-relational concept of identity belong together. At this stage no arguments have been developed as a criticism of Being-towards-death. The method instead will be to offer an alternative to the individualised non-relational view of identity. The plan of this chapter is to offer Buber's concept of personal identity as a critical tool, which will itself be open to criticism from the perspective of Being-towards-death, a perspective which leaves no room for a relational identity.

Before proceeding, some comments will be made on the requirements for an alternative view, taking further what was said at the end of the last chapter. It seems that for an alternative view of identity to be viable, it must be shown:

- a) that Being-towards-death, and therefore individualised existence, do not adequately express the wholeness of man, and
- b) that wholeness is a realisable possibility.

On the first requirement it would have to be shown that 'man' is not man at all as one who dies; i.e. that his identity is countered by death rather than being confirmed by it. It has been suggested above that such a position requires a re-examination of the relationship between identity and the 'world', for Heidegger has shown that the character of 'world' and the question of who I am are closely related. More precisely it would mean that the ground for personal identity is to be sought beyond man's physical and mental nature, for as an embodied existence, man is inextricably part of the world of causal necessity leading to decay and death. Yet, given the linking of identity and the space-time world, it could not simply be said that man's identity is grounded in an immaterial soul or spirit with a capacity for immortality. If he did have such a capacity to transcend death, it would be difficult to explain the forming effect which death undoubtedly has on his identity. From Heidegger's analysis it can be concluded that an alternative identity requires an alternative understanding of space and time.

Given that requirement, the problem of how wholeness could be a possibility for man remains unsolved, for the inevitability of death cannot be ignored. This means that any talk of wholeness as a 'present' possibility must include hope as an indicator of the temporal dimension. This hope is that the structures of space and time could be

transformed so as to support rather than destroy wholeness.

The task of this section is to discover how Martin Buber's concept of personal identity stands up to these criteria, and whether he does enable a way to be found beyond Heidegger.

### The Homelessness of Man

Buber's concept of personal identity stands opposed to Heidegger's though not quite in the way he himself supposes. In his essay, "What is Man?"<sup>1</sup> Buber's criticism is that Heidegger's man is self-relational in contrast to the view that he is "essentially related to something other than himself".<sup>2</sup> According to Buber, with Heidegger:

... the anthropological question, which the man who has become solitary discovers ever afresh, the question about the essence of man and about his relation to the Being of what is, has been replaced by another question, the one which Heidegger calls the fundamental-ontological question, about human existence in relation to its own Being.<sup>3</sup>

Buber explains that in past ages the man who has felt the burden of solitude in the world has been able to "stretch out his hands beyond the world" to meet the "divine form of Being with whom, solitary as he is, he can communicate". But since the cry "God is Dead", the solitary man can seek an "intimate communication only with himself".<sup>4</sup> This is where Heidegger stands, so that he has to say that

... the individual has the essence of man in himself and brings it to existence by becoming a 'resolved' self. Heidegger's self is a closed system.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>This essay, written in 1938, is found in translation in Between Man and Man (London: Fontana Library, 1961), pp. 148-247, hereafter referred to as BMM.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 208.



With these criticisms Buber seems to have misunderstood Heidegger's intention, which certainly is concerned with the question of the meaning of Being, not simply the Being of man. He does not portray man as standing in relation to himself, but to Being. The idea of the individual having an 'essence' of man in himself is alien to Heidegger's thought and contrary to his founding concept of Dasein as Being-in-the-world. Further, as Jean Wahl comments on these passages:

The self of resolute decision is not necessarily--and even is necessarily not--a separate self.<sup>1</sup>

These points have been established in previous chapters and need no elaboration here. Buber is misguided in thinking that the issue between Heidegger and himself is whether man is related only to himself or to others. This alternative is the result of a deeper issue. Both philosophers understand man in relation to 'Being'. The point of distinction is whether the ground of identity is the 'not' which condemns man to a non-relational rather than self-relational existence, or whether the ground is such as to enable man to find his identity-in-relation.

It is for this reason that the chapter does not begin with an account of the 'I-Thou' relation, but with Buber's understanding of the ground of personal identity.

A convenient starting point is his feeling for the 'homelessness' of man which, it could be argued, lies behind much of his work. There is an awareness of both the "cosmic and social homelessness" of man, who is individualised and separated from his fellow man, and also

---

<sup>1</sup>Jean Wahl, "Buber and the Philosophers of Existence", in The Philosophy of Martin Buber, The Library of Living Philosophers, Vol. XII, edited by P.A. Schilpp and M.A. Friedman (Illinois: Open Court, 1967), p. 496. Hereafter referred to as PMB.

bound by his finitude as a creature of space and time.<sup>1</sup> For Buber, as for Heidegger, it is the phenomenon of 'homelessness'<sup>2</sup> which first enables man, from within a world of beings, to understand his relation to Being.<sup>3</sup> It is only the man who is aware that he is solitary who discovers that he is a 'problematic' being. Only when he has let go of the pretence that he is at home in the universe can man begin to feel the mystery of his Being-there at all, and at this point he can begin to discover who he is. For Buber, the question "What is Man?" cannot be answered:

... on the basis of a consideration of the human person as such, but (so far as an answer if possible at all) only on the basis of a consideration of it in the wholeness of its essential relations to what is .... Since the depths of the question about man's Being are revealed only to the man who has become solitary, the way to the answer lies through the man who overcomes his solitude without forfeiting its questioning power.<sup>4</sup>

Both philosophers are critical of attempts by man to evade homelessness and anxiety attempts which let man turn away from the wholeness of his Being. For Buber, man seeks security from solitude in either individualism or collectivism, but neither "advances to man as a whole". "If individualism understands only a part of man, collectivism understands man only as a part."<sup>5</sup> Both evade the "questioning power" of solitude. Individualism is interpreted as an acceptance and glorification of solitude, but at the cost of isolating self from the

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Heidegger's term, unheimlich which is associated with Anxiety, in BT, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup>BMM, p. 233.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 241.

world. Collectivism is an attempt to escape man's "destiny of solitude" by immersing oneself in the group, but the problem of man's isolation is not solved here. It is "overpowered and numbed".<sup>1</sup> Heidegger would agree with this preliminary analysis for he too rejects the isolation of self from the world, and the absorption of self in the world, as adequate descriptions of authentic existence. Both philosophers offer a concept of authentic or 'owned' selfhood which is achieved only when man looks beyond what is within the world, to the 'world' as a totality. They argue that it is only when man holds on to the insecurity of his solitude that he can find a way through to wholeness. The difference lies in the path taken to authenticity, for while Heidegger finds in solitude itself the way to personal identity, Buber investigates man's solitude in order to point towards a world in which he is far from solitary. For Buber man is authentically himself as "the single One" (der Einzelne), but that focusing of identity is found not in the 'existential solipsism' of Heidegger, but in encountering others.<sup>2</sup> In the relationship of man with man, Buber finds a new world, a "genuine third alternative" to individualism and collectivism.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Sphere of 'Between'

This new world is named by Buber as "the sphere of 'between'",<sup>4</sup> from which a new concept of personal identity can arise. For Buber the

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup>For Buber's development of the concept of der Einzelne, in contrast with der Einzige, the solitary ego, see BMM, pp. 60-108.

<sup>3</sup>BMM, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid; cf. p. 126.



sphere of 'between' is a "primal category of human reality". The "fundamental fact of human existence is man with man", from which the individual and the aggregate emerge as "mighty abstractions".<sup>1</sup>

Once man is aware that he is solitary he is then able to recognize the 'other' in all its 'otherness'. The 'between' is the term Buber gives to the sphere of 'meeting' (Begegnung) in which one person faces another recognising him in his otherness and thereby stepping into relation with him.

The view which establishes the concept of the "Between" is to be acquired by no longer localising the relation between human beings, as is customary, either within individual souls or in a general world which embraces and determines them, but in actual fact between them. "Between" is not an auxiliary construction but the<sup>2</sup> real place and bearer of what happens between men.

Buber insists that the 'moments' when men meet or "'happen' to one another", even though they are fleeting, cannot be reduced to feelings within the participants in the encounter:

The dialogical situation can be adequately grasped only in an ontological way. But it is not to be grasped on the basis of the ontic of personal [i.e. individual] existence, or of that of two personal existences, but of that which has its being between them, and transcends both .... On the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective, on the narrow ridge, where 'I' and 'Thou' meet, there is the realm of the 'Between'.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 244. The curious passage at the end of Part II of I and Thou becomes clear if seen as Buber's way of saying that all security is illusory. The seeming choice between isolation and absorption is depicted by two rows of pictures entitled "One and All". Either the 'I' is immersed in the world; or the world is absorbed in the 'I'. Both pictures make a man shudder for they offer a false security. But a time comes when he sees both pictures together, and a deeper shudder seizes him. Although Buber ends the section there, it seems that the 'deeper shudder' occurs because the man realises that to be whole he must abandon the security of any form of 'I', and must step into the insecure, literally in-substantial realm of the 'between', which for Buber is the only reality. See Martin Buber, I and Thou, 2nd. edition, translated by R. Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1958), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>BMM, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

Buber's insight, as presented in the book forming the heart of his philosophy, I and Thou is that both 'I' and 'Thou' have no reality apart from the relation between them. There is no 'I' taken in itself but only the 'I' of the primary word 'I-Thou' and the 'I' of the primary word I-It.<sup>1</sup> The relational principle is stated in the first paragraphs of I and Thou in Buber's insistence that the 'primary words' I-It and I-Thou are not constructed from pre-existing components, 'I', 'Thou' and 'It'. In themselves the primary words express reality, and are irreducible. Far from reaching a deeper level by isolating the components, all that is done is to create abstractions. There is no 'I' who relates to 'Thou' but only the relation 'I-Thou.' 'Who' man is in his wholeness can be answered only from between man and man. Apart from the relation between man and man, there is no Being of man, for Being is relation. What makes a person unique, and identifiable is the unrepeatable set of relationships with others. Remove the relationships and that person is no more, for he 'is' the relationships.<sup>2</sup>

It might appear from the above quotations that Buber attempts to dissolve the concrete reality of the participants in dialogue in favour of the realm of the 'between', as if to say that the relationship itself is the only reality. If this is Buber's position, it is open to the criticism that a person as a creative centre is infinitely more than the

---

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Buber does not make clear whether his analysis of personal identity is intended as descriptive or prescriptive. He presents the primary words as though they reflected the actual world, in which case I and Thou is an essay in descriptive metaphysics; but as will be shown later in the chapter, there are strands of his thought in which he seeks to justify his categories, and is concerned to produce a better structure of thought about the world, or in P.F. Strawson's words, to essay a "revisionary" metaphysics. Cf. P.F. Strawson, Individuals (London: Methuen, 1964), p. 9.



relationships in which he is involved. Are we to cast aside the peculiarities of personality, and the creative gifts which make another person special to us, as of no ontological significance compared to the 'between'? Indeed, does it make sense to talk of relation without also talking of the terms which are related? Thus Gabriel Marcel comments:

It seems to me rather difficult not to translate the term Beziehung as relation. Yet every relation is a connection between two terms .... But can 'I' and 'Thou' be regarded in this way?<sup>1</sup>

Marcel's conclusion is that the English word 'relation' as a translation of Beziehung is confusing because it seems to imply the possibility of considering the 'poles' of the relation on their own, apart from the relation between them. According to Marcel, Buber does not use the word Beziehung in this sense:

It seems to me he has in mind something much more mysterious which cannot be defined in an arithmetical or geometrical language. He means basically that, in the presence of human beings there is created among them, let us not say even a field of forces, but a creative milieu, in which each finds possibilities of renewal. The term 'meeting' (Begegnung), is here far more adequate than that of 'relation'.<sup>2</sup>

In focusing attention on relation, on the 'between', Buber does not conceive of the relation between I and Thou as a "kind of stellar space existing independently of the two terms which it separates".<sup>3</sup> Nor does he deny the concrete reality of the participants in dialogue. Indeed, in

<sup>1</sup>"I and Thou" in PMB, p. 44. Similar criticisms are made by Philip Wheelwright, "Buber's Philosophical Anthropology", PMB, p. 94: "Do we not affirm rather than deny the two personal existences when we speak of what lies 'between' them?". Cf. Steven T. Katz, "Dialogue and Revelation in the Thought of Martin Buber", Religious Studies, Vol. 14, March 1978, pp. 57-68, who claims that in his view of the I-Thou relation, Buber ignores the concrete spatio-temporal character of the participants. In effect, 'Thou' is a word without the power to differentiate between one person and another (p. 65).

<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., PMB, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Emmanuel Levinas, "Martin Buber and the Theory of Knowledge", PMB, p. 139.



a biographical note describing his first awareness of the I-Thou relation, Buber states that what shook him was the "immense otherness of the Other".<sup>1</sup> For Buber, "Only when the individual knows the other in all his otherness as himself, as man, and from there breaks through to the other, has he broken through his solitude in a strict and transforming meeting".<sup>2</sup> He does not deny the centredness of identity, but argues that it is an abstraction to consider the 'I' in separation from the relationships in which it participates. His concept of the 'between' arises from his conviction that a meeting of dialogue is not exhaustively depicted by reference only to the subjectivity of A and B considered separately, and of their mutual effects on each other. A phenomenological analysis, for Buber, demands the use of the category of 'betweenness':

I proceed from a simple real situation: two men are engrossed in a genuine dialogue. I want to appraise the facts of this situation. It turns out that the customary categories do not suffice for it. I mark: first the 'physical' phenomena of the two speaking and gesturing men, second, the 'psychic' phenomena of it, what goes on 'in them'. But the meaningful dialogue itself that proceeds between the two men and into which the acoustic and optical events fit ... remains unregistered. What is its nature, what is its place? My appraisal of the facts of the case cannot be managed without the category that I call 'the between'.<sup>3</sup>

Buber, like Heidegger is attempting to show that man can find his true self in going beyond the boundaries of himself. With the concept of the 'between', he believes he has found the ontological ground for man's wholeness achieved in relation, as opposed to Heidegger's wholeness in isolation. In the context of this thesis, the question must be asked of Buber, what enables him to find in the realm of the 'between'

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 41

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>3</sup>PMB, p. 706, "Replies to my critics".

an alternative to Heidegger's ontology?

The 'between' and the Eternal Thou'

Buber indicates in a biographical note how, in the face of solitariness he came to a hope in man's wholeness through relation. He recounts how at the age of fourteen, he was overwhelmed by the lostness of man in the universe;

I had to try again and again to imagine the edge of space, or its edgelessness, time with a beginning and an end or a time without beginning or end, and both were equally impossible, equally hopeless--yet there seemed to be only the choice between the one or the other absurdity.<sup>1</sup>

The threat of space and time to his Being became so strong that he admits he contemplated suicide. Salvation came in the form of Kant's

Prolegomena to all Future Metaphysics which

... showed me that space and time are only the forms in which my human view of what is, necessarily works itself out; that is, they were not attached to the inner nature of the world but to the nature of my senses.<sup>2</sup>

The significance of this interpretation of Kant was that the threat to his Being was removed:

Being itself was beyond the reach alike of the finitude and the infinity of space and time, since it only appeared in space and time but did not itself enter into this appearance. At that time I began to gain an inkling of the existence of eternity as something quite different from the infinite, just as it is something quite different from the finite, and of the possibility of a connection between me, a man, and the eternal.<sup>3</sup>

On this passage, twenty years later, Buber declares that through Kant the

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 169; cf. "Autobiographical Fragments, PMB, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>BMM, p. 169.

way was opened up to him to ask the question:

But if time is only a form in which we perceive, where are 'we'? Are we not in the timeless? Are we not in eternity? By that ... what is meant is ... that which sends forth time out of itself and sets us in that relationship to it that we call existence. To him who recognises this, the reality of the world no longer shows an absurd and uncanny face: because eternity is.<sup>1</sup>

With this reference to eternity the first clue is given as to how Buber takes a different path from Heidegger. The realm of the 'between' is grounded in Being, which is eternal. Because of eternity, man's finitude need not be encapsulating. His solitude only crushes him if he seeks the ground of his Being within the world. Solitude can have a positive value if it reminds man that the ground of his Being is God. For Buber, man is only man when, finite as he is, he participates in the eternal through the meeting with others. At this point Buber's anthropology diverges decisively from Heidegger's, for his definition of man involves a relation to God. Man is only man in relation to God.<sup>2</sup> Limited and partial in himself, man can become whole in relation to another self. "The other self may be just as limited and conditioned as he is; in being together the unlimited and unconditioned is experienced."<sup>3</sup> This is so because the meeting with the other "beings the radiance of eternity to me."<sup>4</sup> In the human relation there is a meeting with the

---

<sup>1</sup>PMB, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Heidegger's position as shown in the last chapter, in which the question of God can be raised only when the analysis of man is complete.

<sup>3</sup>BMM, p. 204. There is no quality 'in' the other person which frees one from finitude but in the meeting with the other, there is a meeting with the Eternal Thou. It is that which frees the person from the grip of mortality. Cf. Feuerbach from whom Buber claims inspiration, BMM, p. 182. For Feuerbach "man with man, the unity of I and Thou is God". For Buber, the unity of I and Thou is man.

<sup>4</sup>BMM, p. 50.



Eternal Thou, and such relations are as strong as death.

A great relation exists only between real persons. It can be as strong as death, because it is stronger than solitude, because it breaches the barriers of a lofty solitude, subdues its strict law, and throws a bridge from self-being to self-being across the abyss of dread of the universe.<sup>1</sup>

Buber is aware of mortality, but unlike Heidegger he is able to release man from its grip by his belief in eternity. He is able to admit that his human life "imprinted with mortality cannot run its course in wholeness; it is bound to separation and division". He can admit that because what is done in this "sphere" can receive its "legitimacy from the sphere of wholeness", i.e. God's sphere. Human wholeness is ultimately found in relation to God.<sup>2</sup>

But God's sphere appears to be "supra historical", and therefore in the encounter with man would seem to lift him above history and his temporality. Buber specifically criticises Heidegger for leaving no room for a "supra-historical reality that sees history and judges it". The concept of "eternity set in judgement above the whole course of history is not admitted". He complains that the knowledge has vanished that 'time' whether contemplated as finite or infinite, cannot be taken as "a finally existing reality, independent and self-contained". For Heidegger, "time is not embraced by the timeless and the ages do not shudder before One who does not dwell in time but only appears in it".<sup>3</sup>

Has Buber found an alternative to Being-towards-death, but at the high cost of a dualism between a sphere of wholeness, and a sphere

<sup>1</sup>BMM, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>M. Buber, Pointing the Way (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), p. 211. Hereafter referred to as PW.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 215, my italics.

of separation? From the above quotations it seems that way. Wholeness for man appears to be a possibility only in relation to the timeless One. As far as man is a creature of space and time, he is destined to death, but in the moments of meeting between man and man, he is raised to another timeless sphere.

Buber himself strongly denies any such dualism. He concedes that in his early period he saw the "religious experience" as a way of being lifted beyond the space-time world. In the mystery of the 'moment' of experience "illumination and ecstasy and rapture held, without time or sequence". In his later thinking, he saw "the illegitimacy of such a division of the temporal life which is streaming to death, and eternity". Only in embracing this temporality by living fully in the "everyday" and accepting "each mortal hour's fulness of claim and responsibility" could the eternal come to pass in time.<sup>1</sup>

In the latter part of this chapter, Buber's notion of eternity will be examined more closely to discover whether in fact he does overcome the dualism, and so arrive at a position where man's wholeness is a present possibility in the face of death and the constrictions of the space-time continuum. Before that point, the I-Thou relation and I-It will be discussed, and the problem of how they can co-exist will be tackled. It seems that, despite protestation from Buber, there are suggestions that the two ways of Being are separated from each other.

#### The Connection Between I-Thou and I-It

In I and Thou there is much to suggest that for Buber there is a dichotomy between man's freedom in the I-Thou relation, and his

---

<sup>1</sup>BMM, pp. 31f. For a denial of dualism cf. M. Buber, The Eclipse of God (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1957), pp. 44, 127.

bondage to a life towards death. In I-Thou and I-It we find two ways of being in the world, and two corresponding ways of being oneself. It is not, as Steven Katz suggests, that the I-It relation is primarily a utilitarian relation which in no way touches the deeper level of man's personal existence and the meaning of his own life.<sup>1</sup> The I-It relation creates man's identity as much as does I-Thou, although the two ways of being oneself are radically different.

The 'I' of the primary word I-It is denoted as individual (Eigenwesen), the subject who stands over against the world and others as object. The individual becomes aware of himself as the "subject of experiencing and using".<sup>2</sup> His identity is found by distinction from other individuals. The individual knows himself to be 'such and such a being' and no more than this. He "neither shares in nor obtains any reality".<sup>3</sup> By this Buber means that the individual cuts himself off from the source of life by seeking the ground of his identity within himself. All that he can achieve is "'life', that is, dying that lasts the span of a man's life".<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, the 'I' of the I-Thou relation is called 'person', and is identified solely by entering into relation with other persons who equally are identified only by their relationships. The aim of the person is to find the source of true life, "for through contact with every 'thou' we are stirred with a breath of the 'Thou', that is, of eternal life".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>I and Thou, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



In contrast to the word 'I-It', the primary word 'I-Thou' can only be spoken with the whole Being.<sup>1</sup> "One stands with the whole of one's Being over against another being and steps into essential relation with him."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the person, as opposed to the individual, is not to discover what sort of being one is but to discover that one is.<sup>3</sup>

By this Buber does not mean that the person gives up his particularity, his being different; only that his distinctness is not the observation point from which he can organise and use the other but only "the necessary framework through which Being can appear".<sup>4</sup> Thus the purpose of the person is to share in reality without appropriating it to himself. The person becomes aware of himself as "sharing in Being, as co-existing, and thus as Being".<sup>5</sup> The person finds the reality of himself in transcending his boundaries to share in Being. The person is free as one who "believes in reality, i.e. "he believes in the real solidarity of the real duality [Zweiheit], I and Thou".<sup>6</sup> Buber tries to defend himself against dualism by claiming that the distinction between individual and person does not mean that there are

... two kinds of man, but two poles of humanity.  
No man is pure person and no man pure individuality.  
None is wholly real and none wholly unreal. Every man  
lives in the twofold I.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 3

<sup>2</sup>Eclipse of God, p. 128.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. I and Thou, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 59. Robert E. Wood, Martin Buber's Ontology: an analysis of I and Thou (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 82, criticising Gregor Smith's translation, says that "there is not one entity, not even a two fold entity, rather there are 2 distinct entities, facing each other in their otherness but bound together by that very fact". This explains nothing. The two persons are not bound together by their otherness, but by their capacity to share in the primal reality which lies in the relation itself. It is the sharing which confirms the distinct Being of each person.<sup>7</sup>I and Thou, p. 65. See also Pointing the Way, p. 211; Eclipse of God, p. 127.

Man is seen to be dipolar; each man lives in the tension between the poles of individuality and personhood.

The problem of the connection between the two 'I's' is not disposed of this easily. Indeed it is highlighted when Buber shows that in the relation of 'I' to the other, there is also a relation to the world. Does man exist in two worlds?

### The World of Freedom and of Causality

To man the world is twofold in accordance with the two ways of being himself.<sup>1</sup> Buber is aware that the I-It way of Being binds man to the world of causality. When an individual says 'I' to the world he is placed at a particular point in space and time, over against the objects of his perception. Whether this object is another human being or not, it is limited and bounded by the I-It word, as is the speaker. Both are trapped at a "specific point in space and time within the net of the world".<sup>2</sup> Within the world of 'It' "Causality has unlimited reign".<sup>3</sup>

Opposed to this world is the world of the I-Thou relation, the world of freedom. For man the world of It does not weigh heavily on him, for he is not limited to it but can continually leave it for the world of relation.<sup>4</sup> The freedom brought about in the I-Thou relation is:

i) a freedom from the boundaries of self. It is a freedom to participate in 'Being' which is discovered only in the midst of relation.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, pp. 3; 3lff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>BMM, pp. 63, 71.

ii) A freedom from space and time, in which man can be whole.

Instead of being seen as a 'part' of the world in connection with other 'parts', in the I-Thou relation persons are, "set free; they step forth in their singleness",<sup>1</sup> i.e. by entering into relation, I release the other to be a whole being. For a moment, I dissolve the network which binds him to his social context as a part of the world. I relate to a being who in all his partial nature as one of a family, class and society represents a world. In relating the 'Thou' "fills the heavens".<sup>2</sup> By relating, I give the other freedom to be; and in so doing I myself am given freedom. I avoid the danger of slipping into an I-It way of being with the other which binds not only the other but myself.<sup>3</sup>

iii) This freedom resists 'order'. 'Order' belongs only to the world of 'It' where there is a continuum. In the world of 'Thou' there are only 'moments' which are unrepeatable, ever new.<sup>4</sup>

iv) Freedom is not only between man and man. The non-human world can be freed by man stepping into relation with it. Buber's famous encounter with the tree releases the tree from being an object in space and time. When he no longer sees the tree but meets it, he is "seized by the power of exclusiveness".<sup>5</sup> The tree becomes 'Thou' to him for a moment. For that moment "the winds of causality cower at his heels and the whirlpool of fate stays its course".<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. BMM, p. 88, where the task of the Single One is to set others free from the crowd, and put them on their way to the kingdom.

<sup>4</sup>I and Thou, pp. 31f.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 2, 23. The possibility of relation with the non-human world must be emphasised, against the common misunderstanding that man has an I-It relation with nature, and I-Thou only with persons.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 9.



The problem of the connection between these two worlds of freedom and causality is a crucial one. Do they simply stand in opposition? If so, and if in some sense Buber claims that identity is 'given' and realisable in the present, as opposed to being glimpsed or anticipated as an eschatological hope, then his ontology as an alternative to Heidegger's Being-towards-death, seems to fail, for the delicate, momentary appearance of the I-Thou relation does not appear to survive the unbroken continuum of the I-It world. As flashes in the darkness the 'moments' of I-Thou would not have the power to overcome causality, but would merely be strange unexplained instants in the world of 'It'. If the presence of the Eternal Thou meant only that in these moments we are transported to another realm separate from the flow of time, this would appear only to be a diversion from man's destiny towards death. If an identity formed in the I-Thou relation is to overcome Being-towards death, then it is imperative that a connection be shown between I-Thou and the spatio-temporal world, for there must be the possibility that the space-time structures do not crush identity but support it.

Buber is aware of the delicate nature of I-Thou,<sup>1</sup> but does not seem to appreciate the threat posed by causality. He acknowledges the transience of the I-Thou relation. No sooner has the moment of meeting passed than the 'Thou' is bound to become an 'It' again.<sup>2</sup> He describes the movement as the "cosmic pathos of the 'I'",<sup>3</sup> the "melancholy of our fate".<sup>4</sup> It is the destiny of the relational moment

---

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 33; cf. pp. 17, 39.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 16, 13, 33, 98.

that it shines out from the depths, to be at once extinguished by the world of 'It'.

How does Buber defend the I-Thou relation? In some of his arguments he seems oblivious to the seriousness of the problem. He argues for the necessity of the world of 'It', for the maintenance of human life. A life of unbroken 'I-Thou' would be unlivable. The world of 'It' brings a necessary order; it is a 'solid' world in which moments of 'I-Thou' are uncanny, tearing us away to dangerous extremes, moments that can be dispensed with.<sup>1</sup> Yet the world of 'It' is not sufficient to sustain man as man:

Without 'It' man cannot live. But he who lives with 'It' alone is not a man.<sup>2</sup>

You cannot meet others in it. You cannot hold on to life without it, its reliability sustains you, but should you die in it, your grave would be in nothingness.<sup>3</sup>

This is simply a statement of the problem, not an answer. There is no indication how man can go beyond the world of 'It'. Buber has seen the constructive aspects of the world of 'It', but seems to have ignored another aspect, of which Heidegger was aware, the notion of facticity. Is there any hope that man can avoid a "grave in nothingness"? From what has been said above, the difficulty about accepting the I-Thou relation as an alternative to Heidegger's Being-towards-death can be summarised as follows. It seems that some connection must be established between the 'moment' of I-Thou encounter and the world of space and time with its inevitable movement towards death. This connection must be such that the I-Thou relation is the ontological ground

---

<sup>1</sup> I and Thou, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

for the I-It, but certain observations could lead to the opposite conclusion. In particular, it seems 1) that the 'moment' of I-Thou is transitory, and is preceded and followed by I-It; 2) the 'moment' of I-Thou itself seems infused with I-It. The criticism has been made that the I-Thou is dependent on I-It. Thus Steven Katz:

We must take full cognizance of the substantial and particular nature of the 'Other' in order to relate to him as a 'Thou' .... This means that when I know another as 'Thou', say in the case of husband and wife, I know my wife as 'Thou' only in and through her being 'objectively and determinately who and what she is .... I do not just have a spontaneous 'Thou' relation to her in some space-time vacuum as Buber's description of I-Thou would suggest. The meeting with my wife as 'Thou' is grounded firmly in space and in time and is the product of events and conditions in the general spatio-temporal continuum which Buber would separate off and relegate exclusively to I-It.<sup>1</sup>

If as Katz claims I-Thou is a product of I-It, then the attempt to find in Buber's thought an alternative to Being-towards-death should be abandoned. But has Katz interpreted Buber correctly? The intention in these pages is to show that Buber does see a connection between I-Thou and the space-time structures, and that the I-Thou relation is the primary ontological category.

Buber's defence is presented here in two parts. The first is concerned with showing that the I-Thou relation is the primary ontological category, and not dependent on I-It. The second is concerned with the relation of the 'moment' of I-Thou to temporal succession. Both parts together indicate how Buber meets the second criterion, raised in the introduction, viz. how human 'wholeness' can be a present possibility in the face of death.

---

<sup>1</sup>Steven Katz, op. cit., p. 62. Cf. Ronald W. Hepburn, Christianity and Paradox (London: C.A. Watts, 1958), p. 35. "A crucial role is played by knowledge about John even in my 'I' and 'Thou' relation with him".



Distance and Relation

In a later essay entitled Distance and Relation (1951)<sup>1</sup> Buber makes a distinction which is not explicit in I and Thou, viz. between 'primal distance', Urdistanz, and the 'I-It'. It seems that 'I-It' is not a threat to 'I-Thou' because 'I-It' is for Buber a secondary phenomenon. The separation, or division between man and man, and between man and nature is not demanded by the nature of the world itself, but is brought about by man.

In this essay Buber still recognises the "twofold principle of human life", but it is not a duality of I-Thou and I-It, of freedom and necessity as I and Thou seems to imply in places. The duality is clarified as a twofold movement--"the primal setting at a distance"--and "entering into relation". The first movement is the presupposition for the second, for "one can only enter into relation with being which has been set at a distance, or more precisely, has become an independent opposite".<sup>2</sup>

It is important to emphasise that "setting at a distance" is not to be equated with 'I-It', although "entering into relation" can be identified with the I-Thou relationship.<sup>3</sup> Urdistanz is given to man as man. It is at this point, says Buber that the "real history of the spirit begins",<sup>4</sup> for having set the 'other' at a distance, he must now decide how to respond to that 'other'.

<sup>1</sup>Urdistanz und Beziehung, published in English in The Knowledge of Man, translated by M. Friedman (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1965), hereafter cited as KM.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>3</sup>See M. Friedman, Martin Buber, The Life of Dialogue (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1955), p. 83.

<sup>4</sup>KM, p. 64.

Maurice Friedman, commenting on the connection between Urdistanz and 'I-It', says that when man fails to enter into relation, the Urdistanz "thickens and solidifies, so that instead of being that which makes room for relation, it becomes that which obstructs it. This failure to enter into relation corresponds to I-It, and Urdistanz thus becomes the presupposition for both I-Thou and I-It".<sup>1</sup> The difference between the two ways of Being lies in how the Urdistanz is coped with.

According to Friedman, who claims Buber's help in private discussion, the difference is that in 'I-It', man shapes and alters the given Urdistanz, and in so doing "the primary state of things is elaborated as it is not in 'I-Thou'".<sup>2</sup> The point that Friedman intends to make is that "the I-It or subject-object relationship is not the primary one, but is an elaboration of the given as the I-Thou relationship is not".<sup>3</sup>

Friedman does not take the matter further, but it seems that here is one of the key notions which explains Buber's confidence in the ontological value of the I-Thou relationship. The I-It world is not a threat to man's freedom and wholeness, because it is a derivative and a distortion of the 'primal distance' whereas I-Thou is not. To use terms which Buber himself does not, it could be said that Urdistanz expresses the DIFFERENCE between man and man, which is preserved in the I-Thou relation. Buber advocates personal identity summed up as IDENTITY IN DIFFERENCE. In the 'I-It' relation, difference becomes hardened into DIVISION, which is then the basis of identity.

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Friedman, Martin Buber, The Life of Dialogue, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

Relating this to the discussion on freedom, if we accept Buber's view, the dichotomy between freedom and necessity would seem to be a distortion of the primal tension. That dichotomy suggests that man has to safeguard freedom in opposition to the I-It world of space and time, which threatens to crush him. For Buber the tension is in man himself in his relation to the world. Freedom stands not in opposition to 'external' necessity but to man's own distortion of reality into the subject-object relationship. Man stands in freedom when, instead of binding the world and himself in a position of division he enters into relationship with the world which is differentiated from him.<sup>1</sup>

In this movement freedom comes because man is standing in relation not to part of the world, nor to the sum of the parts, but to the "world as such".<sup>2</sup> This understanding is possible only when what is over against me in the world is seen "in its full presence" and when I too am "present in my whole person, in relation".<sup>3</sup> Freedom only comes when the I-Thou relationship goes beyond the mutual confirmation of the other's uniqueness to the acknowledgement of the presence of the whole world in this meeting. In this event, there is a "making present" of a reality which is contained neither by the two persons nor by a supposed unity which obliterates their differences but in the 'between', the primal category of human reality.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Heidegger who does accept the 'thereness' of space and time. One of the guiding questions of the thesis is how man can be free in the face of necessity. Buber's position here seems simply to be an evasion of that question.

<sup>2</sup>KM, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 70.



In a way, what Buber is attempting in the essay Distance and Relation is an interpretation of the spatiality of man, one which avoids the disruptive effect on Being-in-relation which the notion of a man at a distinct point 'in' space implies. Instead of seeing man in space, he sees space 'in' man, i.e. distance is not independent of man but changes its character depending on how he reacts to it.

Clearly, with his notion of the spatiality of man Buber does not advocate a dualism between that which constitutes personal identity and the physically present body. He is concerned to find a connection between the I-Thou relation and the spatio-temporal world, without concluding that the I-Thou relation is a product of that world. Thus Katz does not represent Buber accurately in claiming that for Buber the I-Thou meeting takes place in a 'space-time vacuum'. Katz's question:

How would I know I was having a 'Thou' relation with my wife rather than my neighbour's wife ... if all physical criteria were absent from the I-Thou relation and from all saying of the Thou?<sup>1</sup>

seems from Buber's perspective to create an unnecessary dichotomy between the I-Thou meeting and the spatio-temporal world. Both are grounded in the 'primal distance' which enables one to recognize the concrete existence of the other without objectifying him. For Buber, to acknowledge that the other has an embodied identity does not imply that his identity is a product of the spatio-temporal world.

Is Katz's criticism met by this argument? It is all very well to talk of the concrete existence of the other, and of 'difference' rather than 'separation' between I and Thou, but how is 'difference' established if not by recognising the separateness of our bodies?

---

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., p. 65.

Granting for the moment that it is possible to recognise the 'concrete' otherness, the embodied character of another person without necessarily treating them in an I-It way, Buber has not so far given any convincing argument that the I-Thou relation is grounded on anything other than the physical presence of that person. As has been noted above, if the ground of a person's identity lies in physical presence, then death forms the ultimate horizon for man, since death clearly brings the end of physical presence.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of the connection between I-Thou and the spatio-temporal world seems to come down to what is meant by being 'present' as a person. Buber wants to avoid saying:

- i) that a person is identified only by his physical presence,
- ii) that his identity, established in some way by his relationship with other persons, is still a product of physical presence.

Yet he also wants to avoid saying that personal presence has nothing to do with the physical body. How then is personal presence to be understood in a way which is not reductionist?

#### Personal Presence and the Eternal Thou

Buber is confident that persons are present to each other in freedom because for him the I-Thou meeting is based on the 'presence' of the Eternal Thou who "by its nature cannot become 'It'".<sup>2</sup> "In each 'Thou' we address the Eternal 'Thou'." <sup>3</sup> It seems to me that the success of this idea depends on whether the 'presence' of the Eternal Thou is seen as a

<sup>1</sup>If relation is grounded in physical presence, how could an I-Thou relationship with God be a possibility?

<sup>2</sup>I and Thou, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

'given' reality, or as an eschatological hope which can be glimpsed or anticipated in the present.

There is much in Buber's writings to suggest that he does advocate the presence of God as an immanent reality. He emphasises that it is in this world that he seeks the 'presence' of God.<sup>1</sup> When this world is seen in its true light, it is seen as a world of glory, of connection rather than separation. The artist, in particular "learns the glory of things so that he expresses them and praises them and reveals their shape to others".<sup>2</sup> It is not that a veil is lifted to reveal another world beyond this one, but this world is seen in its fullness as in the presence of God. The concept of Urdistanz indicates that there is one world, of which the causal world is a distortion created by man. On this view the meeting of I and Thou is not an escape from the spatio-temporal world into a world of freedom, but is a meeting with the world in its fullness:

I know nothing of a 'world' and a 'life in the world' that might separate a man from God. What is thus described is actually life with an alienated world of 'It', which experiences and uses. He who truly goes out to meet the world goes out also to God.<sup>3</sup>

The criticism has been made that Buber advocates pantheism.<sup>4</sup> It is easy to see how that impression could be formed, even from the motto on the title page of I and Thou,

So, waiting, I have won from you the End:  
God's presence in each element.

Goethe

<sup>1</sup>PW, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>I and Thou, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup>James Brown, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Buber and Barth (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 142ff.



But his view could more accurately be described as 'panentheistic'.

It is not that God is identified with the spatio-temporal world, but that the world is identified in Him;

For to step into pure relation is not to disregard everything but to see everything in the 'Thou', not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis. To look away from the world, or to stare at it, does not help a man to reach God, but he who sees the world in Him stands in His presence. 'Here world, there God' is the language of 'It'; 'God in the world' is another language of 'It'; but to eliminate or leave behind nothing at all, to include the whole world in the 'Thou', ... to include nothing beside God but everything in him--this is full and complete relation .... Of course God is the 'wholly Other'; but He is also the wholly Same, the wholly Present.<sup>1</sup>

Can this view counteract the suggestion that the I-Thou meeting depends on physical presence, and therefore that death is the horizon for man? It seems that it cannot, precisely because God is claimed to be "wholly present". Although not identified with the spatio-temporal world, the suggestion that it is identified with Him implies that He cannot critically 'distance' himself from the world. Buber tries to avoid the position in which the spatio-temporal world is God--"God comprises, but is not the universe"<sup>2</sup>--yet the claim that He comprises the world is sufficient to make His relationship to the world one of natural identity rather than of freedom. If, in the I-Thou encounter, the world is seen to be as it 'really' is, as the Presence of God, then there is no possibility that man can be freed from the grip of death. If God is already 'wholly Present' in the world there seems to be no hope of a 'transformation' of the space-time structures in which, to

---

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

use the words of the Book of Revelation,

God himself will be with his people; he will wipe  
away every tear from their eyes, and death shall  
be no more.

Rev. 21:3-4

A hope for the 'transformation' of creation seems to require that God is in some way not identified wholly and exhaustively with the world as it is now containing suffering, decay and death. It seems that for hope to be viable, the 'focus' of God's presence must lie beyond history, although He may in some sense be present in history. For Buber, in the passages considered so far the focus of God's Presence seems to be history itself, albeit the strange history of the meetings of 'I' and 'Thou'.<sup>1</sup>

This identification of the spatio-temporal world with God does not mean that He necessarily endorses suffering, decay and death, but that He is powerless to alter the situation. With respect to the basis of personal presence it means that ultimately one's identity is grounded in the physical body. If this represented Buber's position completely, then the project to establish a relational identity in the face of death would fail. However, another strand can be traced in Buber's thought, one in which the relation of the Eternal Thou to history is seen eschatologically.

### The Eschatological Presence of the Eternal Thou

It has been argued that Buber's concept of 'primal distance' fails to prevent the isolation of persons, if it is seen as a description

---

<sup>1</sup>The point can be put another way by asking the question, Is the creation necessary for God to be God? Does God sustain the world voluntarily, or does he have a natural relation with creation?

of the way the world is. However there are passages which suggest that Buber introduces a temporal dimension to his understanding of primal distance, i.e. personal presence is interpreted as the 'making present' of the future. Just as the separation of bodies in space is, for Buber, a distortion of the spatiality of man, so is the division of time into discrete moments of past, present and future a distortion of the temporality of man:

The present, and by that is meant not the point which indicates from time to time in our thought merely the conclusion of 'finished' time, ... but the real filled present, exists only in so far as actual presentness, meeting and relation exist. The present arises only in virtue of the fact that the 'Thou' becomes present.<sup>1</sup>

Personal presence for Buber is a possibility because man is not trapped at a point in space and time. In the I-Thou meeting he becomes open to the Eternal Thou whose Presence is not encapsulated by the moment. This position seems to be directly contradictory to the sense of the passages quoted earlier in which the Eternal Thou is said to be 'wholly Present'. Buber, while appreciating the difference between the two interpretations of 'Presence', does not appear to appreciate the importance of stating precisely what he means. For example he can say that "human life" is "created" by the "central Presence of the 'Thou', or rather, more truly stated, by the central 'Thou' that has been received in the present".<sup>2</sup> As has been noted above, the modification is vital if there is to be a hope for the transformation of the space-time structures. In the following pages it will be argued that, alongside his 'panentheistic' view, Buber also has a view of presence in which a 'distance' is

---

<sup>1</sup>I and Thou, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 46.



maintained between the 'Eternal Thou' and history.

In form this view is close to Heidegger's, in that it receives its orientation from the future. For Buber there is what might be described as a horizon of presence, rather than Heidegger's ecstatic horizon of absence. For both, to live a life as a succession of 'nows' from birth to death is to 'be' in a way which avoids wholeness. For each the understanding of wholeness is moulded by the horizon. Only because Buber believes in a horizon of presence can he maintain that the wholeness of man's Being is found in the I-Thou relation. In that relation there is the possibility of encounter with the 'central Thou' who is not wholly reducible to the present moment, nor wholly outside it, but who raises the moment into the Eternal Presence, uniting past, present and future. This is a "continuous present", in which the "redemptive function of the absolute future is prepared in the present".<sup>1</sup>

How is the "absolute future" made present? Buber is clear that "Redemption", or the freeing of persons and world, must be effected in space and time,<sup>2</sup> but not in the sense that the Eternal Thou is 'wholly present' in any datable historical 'event' of the past.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Buber, in a letter to Hugo Bergmann in 1917, quoted by Paul R. Flohr in "The Road to I and Thou. An Inquiry into Buber's Transition from Mysticism to Dialogue", in Texts and Responses, ed. by H.A. Fishbane and Paul R. Flohr (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), p. 224. Cf. BMM, p. 225, "... a way to eternal Being still stands open, in the content of eternity of each moment into which the whole existence is put and lived".

<sup>2</sup>I and Thou, p. 110. The meaning of the Presence of the Eternal Thou "is not that of 'another life', but that of this life of ours, not one of a world 'yonder' but that of this world of ours, and it desires its confirmation in this life and in relation with this world".

<sup>3</sup>Flohr, op. cit., p. 224, "Through the redemptive function the absolute future is prepared in the present, the continuous present. The consummation (Vollendung) of this future time is beyond our consciousness; on the other hand its execution (Vollzug) is indeed accessible to our consciousness .... But precisely from this fact it follows that the consummation cannot be an event--it is not to be located in a discrete, conscious instance of the historical past."

Thus:

God's redeeming power is working everywhere and at all times ... yet nowhere and at no time is there a state of redemption.<sup>1</sup>

It is not that, for Buber, God's redeeming power is ineffective but that it cannot be restricted to one 'event':

The moment of redemption is real not only with respect to its fulfilment, but also in itself; the moments of redemption cannot be added up; although they form a series, yet each of them reaches the secret of fulfilment ...; each of them takes its place in the sequence of time ... but each of them also bears its own testimony .... This however does not mean that each moment becomes a mysterious, timeless now; rather does it mean that each moment is filled with all time: In the hovering fraction of time, the fullness of time is manifested .... It is a mistake to regard the Jewish teaching about the Messiah merely as a belief in a unique, final event and in a unique, human being as the centre of this event .... The Messiahship of the end of time is preceded by one of all times, poured out over the ages.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, Buber explicitly rejects the interpretation of the Messiah as a "special category", the One Man who in one 'event' would bring about redemption.<sup>3</sup>

Why should Buber be so eager to deny the presence of God in one complete 'event' of redemption? Could it be that to acknowledge a unique, final 'event' within the historical time sequence would be to view God's act in an I-It way, to use Buber's term. Would such a redemptive act mean the compelling presence of God in one 'event', and thereby limit his presence to that objectifiable place and time? Buber's argument seems to be that the redemptive power of the Eternal Thou appears in every 'event', but is not exhausted in any 'event'. The significance

<sup>1</sup>M. Buber, "The Two Centres of the Jewish Soul" in Mamre, Essays in Religion, translated by Greta Hort (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 25. Hereafter referred to as Mamre.

<sup>2</sup>M. Buber, "The Interpretation of Chassidism" in Mamre, pp. 115ff.

<sup>3</sup>M. Buber, The Prophetic Faith (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 144. Hereafter referred to as PF.



of each 'event' is not to be found in itself but as it anticipates the "absolute future".<sup>1</sup>

What is the meaning of the "absolute future"? Having rejected a final redemptive event in the past, does Buber also discount a future event of consummation? He certainly rejects an apocalyptic hope for a future which is "no longer in time",<sup>2</sup> a future which would be divorced from this world of space and time as much as would a timeless 'present'. For Buber there can be no dichotomy between the historical continuum and a future in a new world. Against this view Buber places what he calls the prophetic expectation. As opposed to some apocalyptic writers who believed in the "supersession of creation by another world completely different in its nature",<sup>3</sup> he shares the Messianic hope of the prophets. According to Buber, the starting point for this hope is not in eschatology understood as a mythical last event breaking into the historical series of events. Such a hope would miss the "special concrete historical core" of the faith of the prophets, a core which "does not belong to the margin of history where it vanishes into the realms of the timeless, but it belongs to the centre, the ever changing

---

<sup>1</sup>The concern behind Buber's words is made clear in his essay "The Two Centres of the Jewish Soul"; it is that to Jewish eyes, the world has an unredeemed character: "the Jew as part of the world, experiences, perhaps more intensely than any other part, the world's lack of redemption .... He cannot concede that the redemption has taken place .... none which by its nature would be unique, which would be conclusive for future ages and which only just had to be consummated .... The Christian is to the Jew the reckless man, who in an unredeemed world affirms that its redemption is accomplished." Mamre, pp. 25ff. Christian theologians who assert that redemption took place in the 'Christ event' must face the problem of why suffering, death and Auschwitz still take place in a 'redeemed' world.

<sup>2</sup>PW, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup>Mamre, p. 27. Cf. PF, pp. 141ff.; PW, pp. 192ff.



centre, that is to say, it belongs to the experienced hour and its possibility."<sup>1</sup>

How then can redemption take place at all in space and time if not in any particular event? Buber's answer is that it happens in the primary event of the I-Thou meeting in the light of which all discrete events in the succession from past to future must be reinterpreted. The I-Thou event is not an isolated moment but the one event in which past, present and future are gathered.<sup>2</sup>

The corollary of the idea that 'Presence' is not exhausted in any one event is that in every event of I-Thou, there is a 'Presence' which transcends the event, temporally. Redemption is a present possibility only because the meaning of the event is not fully expressed in contingent terms, but only in hope of a consummation of creation.<sup>3</sup>

In light of what has been said above, the 'event status' of this 'consummation' is problematical. Hugo Bergmann expresses the difficulty well:

The notion of a "messiahship ... of all times, poured out over the ages", suppresses, I am afraid, any real belief in the ultimate Messiahship--in the redemption of nature, in the overcoming of hostile forces and the conquest of death (Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14).<sup>4</sup>

In other words, unless there is a hope for a future consummation in which the capacity of nature to destroy personhood is reversed, there can be

<sup>1</sup>PF, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>In his "Replies to my Critics", in PMB, p. 712, Buber states that he prefers to use "Relationship" (Beziehung) rather than 'Meeting' (Begegnung) in order to avoid the temporal limitation suggested by the latter.

<sup>3</sup>See Mamre, pp. 27ff.; p. 17.

<sup>4</sup>"Martin Buber and Mysticism" in PMB, p. 305.

no personal presence now. Buber himself, in response to Bergmann affirms his belief in an eschaton, but not in a happening which usurps man's freedom to respond. He believes in consummation, but only as an 'event' which is prefigured in the I-Thou relation. As such the 'event' of consummation itself seems to be one in which man is involved.<sup>1</sup> Thus Buber declares that the Messianic prophecy conceals an alternative. There is no prediction concerning the future, but an offer, in which "something essential must come from man". In this is shown the "paradox of man's independence, which God has willed and created; we stand in the dramatic mystery of the one facing the other". There is an openness in the future given with the Messianic promise, which needs man's active decision. The fulfilment of the promise "must rise out of the historic loam of man".<sup>2</sup> There is no need for a special category of Messiah but simply man with man. For Buber, man in relation to the 'Living Centre' is where God brings newness and transformation to the world. "Man is created to be a centre of surprise in creation."<sup>3</sup> In the I-Thou relationship, in which the Eternal Thou is received in the 'present', the world of It is transformed.<sup>4</sup> In the meeting of 'I and Thou' the dichotomy between wholeness and separation is overcome, but only because in the meeting, the consummation of creation is anticipated. "There is not one realm of the spirit and another of nature; there is only the coming realm of God."<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>"Replies to My Critics" in PMB, p. 714: "I believe in the redeeming act poured forth over the ages in which man has a share. These events do not add themselves to one another, but all together they cooperate secretly in preparing the coming redemption of the world.

<sup>2</sup>PF, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup>PW, p. 198.

<sup>4</sup>I and Thou, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup>Mamre, p. 25.

How can this transformation be realised in the face of the painful separation which characterises the world? Clearly not by attempting to join together the isolated transient moments of 'I and Thou' into a continual act of redemption prolonged through history. There is no suggestion that man's relation to nature, to his fellow man and to the Eternal Thou, is developing in history. Rather, the transformation is glimpsed in the fleeting moment of 'I-Thou' relation, in which man is not in space and time, but they are caught up in him.<sup>1</sup> Then, without striving to overcome the connection with 'It', "the time of human life is shaped into the fullness of reality" by the relation to the Living Centre. When that happens life is "so penetrated with relation that relation wins in it a shining streaming constancy; the moments of supreme meeting are then not flashes in darkness but like the rising moon in a clear starlit night".<sup>2</sup>

Similarly space is transformed by men's relation with their "true Thou", who stands at the centre of radial lines that form a circle. Only then, when space and time are "bound up" in a Community that is made one by the Eternal Thou at its centre, only then does there exist "a human cosmos with bounds and form, grasped with the Spirit out of the universal stuff of the aeon, a world that is house and home, a dwelling for man in the universe".<sup>3</sup>

With Buber's references to the transformation of space and time, it is clear that his hope for the future is not merely the realisation of a perfect society within the existing space-time structure. That hope cannot be reduced to a hope in a Kingdom on earth brought

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. I and Thou, pp. 30; 51; 100.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



about by man. In response to Urs von Balthasar who censures Buber for offering man only a social future, he replies that he believes both in a future perfection of society, and in a future transformation of the world, in one:

Only in the building of the foundation of the former I myself may take a hand, but the latter may already be there in all stillness when I awake some morning, or its storm may tear me from sleep. And both belong together, the 'turning' and the 'salvation'; both belong together, God knows how, I do not need to know it. That I call hope.<sup>1</sup>

The only certainty in this hope is that salvation will take place in community, which in the present is the only arena in which the Eternal Thou 'is'.<sup>2</sup> For Buber, it is the presence of the Eternal Thou in time which can save man from the inexorable necessity of the world of 'It'. Even though man does live from birth towards death, even though he knows he is going to die,<sup>3</sup> yet he is related to the Eternal Thou in the meeting with man. The Eternal Thou gathers together past, present and future, so that the meeting of 'I' and 'Thou' is not timeless by timeful.

#### Summary and Criticism

We have come full circle, from the homelessness of man to Community as man's home, his dwelling place in the universe. The question must now be asked whether Buber's view of identity provides a successful alternative to Heidegger's Being-towards-death.

---

<sup>1</sup>PMB, p. 715, commenting on von Balthasar's remarks on p. 356.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. BMM, p. 24: "It is the night of expectation--not a vague hope, but an expectation. We expect a theophany of which we know nothing but the place, and the place is called community."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. BMM, p. 150.

The key issue is the one to which attention has been given in this chapter, viz. the connection of the 'free' person to the space-time structures. Buber, like Heidegger, rejects a personal identity given by the physical presence of the self-subsistent individual. This would mean a compulsion to recognise the 'other' by the very fact that he was 'there', and for Buber this inevitably is an I-It way of Being with him. The problem has been how to establish the freedom of personal presence without advocating a dualism between 'person' and 'body', in which the significance of physical presence for personal identity is ignored.

Buber's solution to the problem of how a person can be freely 'present' in space and time is to turn to Community round the Living Centre. Community cannot be empirically observed,<sup>1</sup> it can only be participated in. In community, the members recognize each other not by physically observable 'present' characteristics, but by being confronted by a love which requires the free presence of the other person for its reality.<sup>2</sup> For Buber, the fact that a person is also physically present does not contradict his 'free' presence in relation, for that freedom is grounded in the Eternal Thou in whom space and time will be transformed.

Does this mean that a viable alternative to Heidegger's ontology has been found? It might seem so, since Buber is offering a way of 'being oneself' which is not based on the physical body with its inevitable passage towards death. There is not here a denial of the connection between personhood and the 'body', but that embodiment is in

---

<sup>1</sup>Buber uses Tonnies' distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft. Only the members of a society can be observed, but not those of a community.

<sup>2</sup>'Love' here is not a psychological phenomenon, a feeling which would be no more than a function of the Individual. 'Love' is relational.

community round the 'Living Centre'.

But how can we say that the 'body' of the community is free from death? What can a person-in-community hope for? No more than a spiritualising of present life in which there is openness and acceptance of the 'other'. There is no hope for a personal transcendence of the limitations of space and time. The person dies, and with him dies the community. In the end the world of separation has its way.

In his recognition of the necessity for a consummation of creation Buber is admitting that man's wholeness is not yet fulfilled. The person who is 'present' here and now is so only because of his relation to the Eternal Thou who is not wholly present but is only "received in the present". Yet there appears to be no hope of a transformation of space and time which would truly change man's Being-towards-death, for man, if he is a personal presence is also physically present in a mode of Being which is destined to death. To say that personhood is 'embodied' in community in relation to the Eternal Thou does not alter that fact. Although personhood is defined by the I-Thou relation and not by the physical body, it is dependent on it if with the death of the body of 'I' and 'Thou' there is separation which destroys the I-Thou relation. Buber can offer no hope that the same fate does not come to persons-in-community. If that is so, then the 'transformation' of space and time is reduced to an alteration in the way we perceive our relation to space and time. In the spatio-temporal structure itself there could be no ontological change which would enable us to hope in the face of death.<sup>1</sup>

The answer to the question raised above concerning the 'event status' of the consummation seems to be that for Buber, the future holds no 'event' which could transform space and time so that death no longer

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the remarks by Jurgen Moltmann on "Eschatology and



reigned. This means that man is a being who is caught in contradiction as a present body destined to death, and as a person whose presence is realised only in the freeing of that body from its limitations. Buber's attempt to avoid the dualism between person and body by eternalising the moment of I-Thou in fact condemns man to it for ever, because it posits an unbridgeable gulf between God who, for Buber, is outside time, and man who is bound to space and time. Earlier it was claimed that the identification of God's presence with the historical process would deny to Him a necessary critical 'distance' from history, and would ensnare Him in a dying creation. In some areas of his thought, Buber avoids this position but seems to arrive at another position in which the Eternal Thou is equally powerless to bring about the redemption of nature and the conquest of death. Here the problem is that if God is in Himself timeless and only appears in history without being in it, he is removed from space and time and no transformation could be effected.<sup>1</sup> Buber understands the 'moment' of I-Thou as a glimpse into eternity, in which the divisions of space and time are overcome. History is to be interpreted through the 'event' of I-Thou which is not an 'event' in

---

Revelation", Theology of Hope (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 69: "Talk of the openness of man is bereft of its ground, if the world itself is not open at all but is a closed shell. Without a cosmic eschatology there can be no assertion of an eschatological existence of man. Christian eschatology therefore cannot reconcile itself with Kantian concepts of science and reality."

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Buber, PW, p. 215, criticising Heidegger for whom "time is not embraced by the timeless and the ages do not shudder before one who does not dwell in time but only appears in it". See above, Wolfhart Pannenberg has a stimulating discussion on "Appearance as the Arrival of Future", in which he contrasts two meanings of the word 'appear'. When some one appears to us, he not only seems to be there; he really is there. But someone may 'appear' to be present without in reality being there. See Pannenberg's Theology and the Kingdom of God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 127ff. Buber's idea of the Eternal Thou who "appears" in time seems to accord with the latter meaning. God only seems to be in history.

a temporal succession, but the event in which all history is represented. The result is that, in avoiding the identification of God and history, Buber collapses history into the 'moment' of I-Thou which is connected transcendently with an "absolute future" which, for all Buber's protestations, is outside time. Thus the coming Kingdom of God has no connection with this world.<sup>1</sup>

Does this mean that Buber's relational ontology must be rejected, leaving no option but to return to Heidegger? Certainly not! Buber's work reveals a longing for communion which cannot be ignored. There can now be no calm acceptance of death as that which enables man to be free, nor can it be said that we simply share the world with others, but they have no share in our 'Being-there'. The I-Thou relation reveals the vulnerability and irreplaceable character of each person, who has been made unique by the relation of love with another. In contrast to Heidegger's man for whom the death of the other does not touch his Being-there, for the person-in-relation the death of the other means the death of himself, since he 'is' only in relation.

In this is shown the tragedy of our existence, a tragedy which is not averted by Buber's understanding of presence. Is there any way beyond this point, or is man a being trapped in contradiction between love which gives him his identity, and death which destroys it?

From the analysis of Buber, it seems that if there is hope for personal as opposed to individual identity in the face of death, the focus of personal presence must be eschatological, i.e. not a 'natural'

---

<sup>1</sup>Jurgen Moltmann's criticism of Barth's eschatology is appropriate with respect to Buber: the eschaton, "breaking transcendently into history, ... makes the eschaton into a transcendental eternity, the transcendental meaning of all ages, equally near to all the ages of history and equally far from all of them". Theology of Hope, p. 39.



identity constructed with reference to the existing spatio-temporal world, yet neither divorced from it. No basis has been established for such an identity, but it would seem that it must be expressed as a resistance to the causal world with its progression towards decay and death. If it is possible to express personal presence, it must be in a way which retains the eschatological tension between 'now' and 'not-yet'. Moltmann comments on an eschatological identity that persons "have not yet attained to identity with themselves, but ... in hope and confidence ... are living to that end and here defy the reality of death".<sup>1</sup> Perhaps a fruitful way of expressing that tension is with the concept of absence, understood not as the opposite of presence but as the way of Being-present which is peculiar to personhood.

Clearly 'absence' in this context would not signify 'lack of physical presence' which would be resolved once the person was physically present. It has been established that personal presence cannot be reduced to a compelling physical presence. What is meant is that 'absence' perhaps can express the mode of Being present as a person here and now, for absence highlights the claim that 'presence' is not determined by spatial boundaries.

This can be illustrated by Sartre's notion of presence and absence. By the fact that his friend is not in the cafe where they had arranged to meet at a particular time, this friend 'fills' the whole cafe. In a glance he sees that Pierre is not there, and this absence does not limit his friend in the way that his physical presence would.<sup>2</sup> 'Absence'

---

<sup>1</sup>Theology of Hope, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, p. 9. Cf. p. 277 where the Absence of the 'other' announces to Sartre that he is present everywhere. Sartre's example of the cafe is used by John Zizioulas in "Human Capacity and Human incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood" in Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. 28, 1975, pp. 401-427. My argument here has been considerably influenced by this paper.



is a particular way of being present, but for Sartre it depends on the concrete existence somewhere of Pierre--on the concrete possibility of his being present. For Sartre "death is not an absence", <sup>1</sup> since that would imply the possibility of concrete presence in death itself.

The argument of this thesis is that unless it can be said that death is an absence, then death determines the Being of man, and there is ultimately no way of Being-present other than physical presence, which is an a-personal mode of Being. The notion of 'absence' in the context of personal identity seems to involve a temporal dimension. Any possibility of Being-present as a person depends on a hope for the transformation of the space-time structures which are characterised by death. This implies that death cannot be accepted but must be resisted, for above all other phenomena it demonstrates personal absence.

Paradoxically, this resistance, if it is to express personhood, must show itself in a willingness to die, since absence is the only way in which the person can be present here and now.<sup>2</sup> This willingness to die differs from that advocated by Heidegger in two crucial respects: a) it is only Personal if the person dies for someone and b) there is the hope that absence is not the ultimate expression of personal identity, but is grounded in a future presence.

At this stage, no justification has been given for such a hope. What is needed is some view of identity in which "death is swallowed up in victory";<sup>3</sup> in which physical death does not annihilate the person

<sup>1</sup>Being and Nothingness, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Moltmann, Religion Revolution and the Future, p. 170: "Any hope against death which does not produce a love for life and a loving readiness to die surely always bears within it the seeds of resignation".

<sup>3</sup>1 Cor. 15:54.

because his identity is in a body not bound by space and time, but which is nevertheless real. Buber's 'community' was not sufficient, because there was no basis for hope in a 'real' transformation of space and time.

In the next chapter the paradox of presence-in-absence will be taken further, but first the results of the analysis of Heidegger and Buber must be drawn together and the view of self emerging must be placed in the context of other views.

## CHAPTER IV

### PERSONS-IN-RELATION

At the end of the last chapter the agenda for this chapter was set, with the problem of how a person could be present in a way which safeguarded his freedom. With the analysis of Buber, the task was to find an alternative to Heidegger's view of isolated selfhood. It had been shown in Chapter II that Heidegger's self, resolute in the face of death, was not strong enough to be free in the way that Heidegger intended. Heidegger had, in a sense, argued too well that death is involved in existence to the point that it somehow creates the authentic self. The point which he sought to make was that by embracing death now, authentic selfhood could be discovered in which the freedom of the self was maintained. It was argued however that death as the 'end' could not be subsumed under 'Being-towards-the-end', and that the freedom to be oneself was denied by death rather than confirmed by it.

In the last chapter an alternative to Heidegger's concept of selfhood was explored, an alternative in which the answer to the question of what it was to be oneself was given not by reference to one's future but to the 'Thou'. Although it was observed that Buber did take note of man's temporality, the emphasis lay decidedly with the immediate, spontaneous encounter of 'I' and 'Thou'. The I-Thou relation offered the possibility of identifying oneself not by reference to one's own physical boundaries but in freedom from them. A person was himself only as he moved beyond himself in the act of saying 'Thou'. Thus it was not the biological nature or personality which ultimately identified each person and made him unique.



His uniqueness was created in the context of communion with other persons and with non-human nature. A person's 'real presence' was dependent not on his own location in space and time but on the capacity to say 'Thou', and to have it said to him.

If personal identity was constituted solely in this way so that each person could be identified only in the context of a relational network in which he loved and was loved,<sup>1</sup> then personal presence would be a matter of freedom, for a person would be present to an other only as he willed to be present. Furthermore a viable alternative would have been found to Heidegger's individualised identity and to the problem of death. Biological death would not affect a personal identity given in this way, for the biological body would have nothing to do with the identity of the person.

Clearly this is not a possibility for human personhood, for man is identified not only in communion but also by his particular physical body. If man can be free to go beyond his boundaries in the act of relating, it is also true that he is identified and limited by his physical body with its unique characteristics and personality, and its inevitable journey towards biological death. Thus the freedom which a person has to disclose himself to, or withhold himself from, another is conditioned by the necessity of his physical presence as a body located in space and time. The paradox and tragedy of personhood is that even though man has the capacity for, or at least the awareness of the possibility of, an ec-static movement beyond his boundaries and therefore the capacity for an identity which is not based

---

<sup>1</sup>Or hated? Buber notes that "the man who straightforwardly hates is nearer to relation than the man without hate and love", I and Thou, p. 16. The important point is that in both love and hate, one encounters not an individual as he could be described by a dis-interested observer but a person who is recognised by the unique relationship he has with oneself.

on the separation of bodies, this ec-static movement is dependent on the physical body, and when the body dies, he dies. Biological death, as death of the substance, does not in itself threaten personal identity constituted by communion. It is a threat because it brings separation from communion.

It seems that, however much one may talk of transcending one's boundaries in the meeting of 'I' and 'Thou', one is nevertheless also identified by one's physical presence. If this dual understanding of presence is taken as a 'given' for ontology, rather than a tension which may be resolved, then it seems that the I-Thou relation must be abandoned at least as an ontological concept. The reasoning behind this statement must be made clear. It will be recalled that Buber seeks to show that persons are present to each other not as objects are present, i.e. in proximity to each other. Persons are present as they enter into relation with each other. For Buber persons 'are' in relating. Thus he introduces an alternative ontology to that in which beings 'are' because of qualities inhering in themselves. The criticism was raised in the analysis of Buber that this simple alternative of presence-in-relation and physical presence did not do justice to the complexity of existence, and in particular to the fact that in an encounter the I-Thou relation seems to be dependent on physical presence. Does it then follow from this dependence that personal presence is ultimately reducible to physical presence? This conclusion has certainly not been reached by the many philosophical traditions which understand the self as 'more than' the body, but there is an important difference between Buber's view and those in which the distinction of 'self' and body is made within the individual. For such views, the problem of the knowledge of other selves can be kept separate from the problem of how the 'self' is related to one's own physical



presence. The identification of 'self' with mind or consciousness is not necessarily affected by the fact that one may have no direct knowledge of others, direct that is in the sense that it is not mediated by observation of the physical presence of the other. With a relational concept of selfhood, on the other hand, it is claimed that the Being of the 'I' is formed through a 'direct' knowledge of the 'Thou', and that a person is present only as he stands in a relationship of love to the 'Thou'. It should be noted that 'knowledge' in this relational sense has been redefined so that it does not mean the awareness of the physical or mental characteristics of the other. As John Zizioulas notes,<sup>1</sup> if persons are 'present' only in an event of communion, the 'knowledge' of other persons can be equated with love. "Knowing emerges . . . only out of loving: love and truth become identical." In other words I can know only what I love. But as the critics of Buber point out, and as Zizioulas himself observes, in the actual encounter of persons, in order to love the other person one needs to know something about him, and love seems therefore to be dependant on physical presence.<sup>2</sup> In that case, to use Buber's own terminology, the I-Thou relation is dependant on I-It. If Buber's ontology is based solely on what actually takes place between persons then it seems that an ontology of relation fails, and the concept of 'free' personal presence must be rejected. This is not, of course, to say that the freedom of selfhood may not be expressed in another way, but it would be another concept of self that was involved. Thus for example

---

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", SJT, vol. 28, 1975, p. 428.

<sup>2</sup>See above, p. 108, where the criticism by Stephen Katz is considered. H.D. Lewis has made similar points in The Self and Immortality, (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 127f. Also, The Elusive Mind (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), pp. 260-274.



equation of the self with the mind as distinct from the body may protect the freedom of the self to be more than observable behaviour, but at the expense of the isolation of the self in its Being, from others. Furthermore, even if one allows that the self is 'more than' the body, it appears that any mental function is dependent on the maintenance of the physical functioning of the body.<sup>1</sup> Thus if the self is identified with the mind, the notion of the capacity of the self to survive the death of the body is as problematical as it is with Buber's relational concept. This is not to deny, of course, that the 'self' may refer to some aspect of existence which is independent of the functioning of the body and may survive without the body. Without entering at this stage into a discussion on the survival of the self, the point can simply be made that views of the self have been constructed in which the 'presence' of the self is not reduced to physical presence, nor is it threatened by the death of the body. Such views are not the subject of this thesis, which is concerned to explore a concept of selfhood in which the self is irreducible to the physically present individual. The point has been reached where the whole possibility of 'presence' in relational terms has been questioned, and the task in this chapter is to consider whether such an ontology is possible, or whether some other view of self might better express the tension between physical presence and the transcendence of the boundaries set by that physical presence. Before these questions are considered,

---

<sup>1</sup>cf A. R. Peacocke, Science and the Christian Experiment (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) pp. 142f.; P. Laslett, ed., The Physical Basis of Mind (London: Oxford University Press, 1957). See also I.G. Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion (London: SCM, 1966), pp. 347-364. Ian Ramsey, who talks of the self as 'more than' the body, and also talks of the survival of the self, fails to consider this problem of the dependence of the self on the body. See I.T. Ramsey, Freedom and Immortality (London: SCM, 1960), p. 65.

the threads of the investigation thus far will be gathered together, to state concisely the concept of selfhood which has emerged, and to place it briefly in context with other notions of the self. Only then will it be possible to assess clearly what is at stake in accepting or rejecting a relational view of the self.

### The Meaning of the Self

The first assumption made in this inquiry was that to look for the centre of personal identity other than in the individual himself was at least a conceivable enterprise,<sup>1</sup> and indeed it was because Heidegger and Buber share this assumption that they came to be considered together. Where then has this assumption led? Two problems concerning selfhood have been tackled; a) the meaning of the concept of self, b) how that self is realised and expressed. Applying the primary assumption to these problems has led to conclusions that differ radically from some common views of the self.

Within the existentialist tradition, and particularly as it is represented here by Heidegger and Buber, the two problems of the meaning of self and its expression have not been viewed in isolation from each other. As was noted above,<sup>2</sup> Heidegger resists the Cartesian conception of the self, not because of its mind/body dualism, but because of the implied ontological assumption that a being can be defined without going beyond what we take it to be in itself. Although the being may stand in certain relations to other beings these are in no way 'essential' to the being

---

<sup>1</sup>See above, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Pp. 13ff.

itself. In the terms used in Chapter I, the ecstatic character of Being is not appreciated by Descartes, or indeed by much of Western philosophy since Descartes. Heidegger's, and Buber's task is to rediscover that ecstasis. For these philosophers the question of what it means to be a self cannot be answered prior to, or in abstraction from, the act of existing in a world. Of course this does not rule out reflection upon existence, but existing itself is the primary material for reflection. Earlier, Heidegger's phrase, "the essence of Dasein lies in existing", was examined, and it was shown that Heidegger does not mean by this that man still has an 'essence' which can now be read off from the act of existing. Rather it was argued that man is, ontologically, nothing more than the capacity to exist. It will be recalled that existence here was used in a special sense to indicate the standing out from his 'actual' state. For Heidegger and Buber in their different ways it was that capacity which identified each man and made him unique. To be a self was to relate to that which was beyond one's bodily boundaries.

This view of selfhood differs radically from other views. To discover what it means to be a self, i.e. what it is that identifies one as unique, a departure is made from the equation of self with the psychological centre, personality, mind or consciousness on the one hand, and with the Boethian concept of rational nature on the other. The term 'self' for Heidegger and Buber does not refer to any entity lying as a 'transcendental unity' behind appearance, nor to any entity integrating perceptions, feelings and thought into an integrated whole, nor with a psycho-somatic unity. This is not to say that the 'self' does not refer to any entity at all for these philosophers. Their position is that man can be a self, but that both the meaning and the realisation of selfhood is found only in 'standing-out' from man in his



'actual' state. Both Heidegger and Buber in their very different ways understand the capacity to be 'ec-static', i.e. to transcend the empirical state as the ground of man's capacity to be particular, i.e. to be at all. With Heidegger this 'ec-stasis' is temporal, with Buber an 'ec-stasis' towards the other. Such relations for them are not merely revelatory of a selfhood, and Being, defined in some other way, but are constitutive of what it is to be a self, and to be at all.

Some aspects of this view of self will be drawn from the previous analysis, but first, other views of the self will be outlined in order to provide a perspective.

#### Concepts of the Self

It will be appreciated that the purpose of this thesis is to explore one particular conception of selfhood. This is not the place to examine in depth other views which, for this purpose must simply be noted in order to make clearer the concept of selfhood under investigation. A full comparison of notions of the self would require an inquiry on its own.

Accepting the risk of over-simplification and hence of distortion, the many views of the self have been subsumed under four classifications, namely, 1) the absolute-universal self; 2) the transcendental-constituting self; 3) the de-ontological or no-self paradigm;<sup>1</sup> 4) the natural organic self. Briefly, these classifications may be described as follows.

---

<sup>1</sup>The classification used here is that presented in a special edition of The Monist on Conceptions of the Self: East and West in an article by David A. Dilworth and Hugo J. Silverman, "A Cross-cultural Approach to the De-ontological Self Paradigm". The Monist, vol. 61, no. 1, 1978, pp. 82f.

1) The absolute-universal self. The primary characteristic of this view, according to Dilworth and Silverman, is that "either the self is identified with the One or Totality, or it 'participates' in the perfection of Being".<sup>1</sup> In the former case no distinction is made between the self as 'relative' and the self as 'absolute'. In the latter a real distinction is held, but theistic accounts propose a re-integration with an ultimate source of Being. Both monistic and theistic variations view the particularity of the self as only a temporary and/or illusory dissociation from the ontologically prior unity of the Self. Although an ancient concept found in theological versions of Hindu and Buddhist thought and in certain strands of Christian neo-Platonism, it appears in modern guise in the Idealism of Hegel, and in Process thought with the idea that finite selves become part of the Divine memory.<sup>2</sup>

2) The transcendental-constituting self. In modern Western philosophy this view, stemming from Descartes, has had a considerable influence on the ways in which we view ourselves and our interaction with the world. The identification of self with consciousness or mind is for some philosophers so axiomatic that they do not appear to be aware of it as a questionable assumption at all. Thus John Hick in his comprehensive survey of possible approaches to death and eternal life, begins by assuming that the self is "the name for that from which our thought

---

<sup>1</sup>The Monist, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. G.F.W. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind (translated by J.B. Baillie, New York: Macmillan, 1931), especially p. 86. There are, however, suggestions in Hegel of a relational concept of selfhood, in Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion (London: Kegan Paul, 1895), vol. III, pp. 10-24. In Process thought, cf. Charles Hartshorne's essay, "Time, Death and Everlasting Life", in The Logic of Perfection (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1962).

necessarily starts, namely the consciousness which is now composing these sentences, or which is now reading them, and which is a source of volitions and a subject of perceptions and emotions."<sup>1</sup> H.D. Lewis, standing within the tradition of Descartes' cogito and Kant's transcendental unity of apperception can argue that "there really must be something at least which makes possible the unification of experience."<sup>2</sup> Significantly the development of this line of thought from the Cartesian cogito leads to something quite different from the transcendental ego, at least as pursued by Sartre, who argues for the emptying of the ego: Sartre denies Husserl's belief in a transcendental ego lying 'behind' consciousness, an 'I' essentially involved, no less than objects, in the very possibility of any act of consciousness whatsoever. Sartre denies the reality of the transcendental ego and reinstates the object of consciousness as the source of the 'I'. His thesis is that there is no ego 'in' or 'behind' consciousness. There is only an ego 'for' consciousness. The ego is in the world of objects. The unity of the ego is given by the object, rather than by some inner principle of unity. Consciousness for Sartre seems to be a totality in itself; the ego can only be an expression of consciousness, as opposed to a condition of it.<sup>3</sup> The interesting point is that a concept of the self in which the reality of a transcendental self is posited has led in Sartre to the opposite view, that there is no-self behind appearance.

---

<sup>1</sup>Death and Eternal Life (London: Collins, 1976), p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>The Self and Immortality (London: Macmillan, 1974), who asks how sense impressions are connected if not by the unifying idea of self.

<sup>3</sup>J.P. Sartre, The Transcendence of the Ego (translated by Williams and Kirkpatrick, New York: Noonday Press, 1957) especially pp. 38ff.



3) The no-self paradigm. In Western philosophy this position is championed by Hume with his account of the self as a "Bundle of perceptions" and his questioning of a principle of unity synthesising the changing perceptions into a coherent whole.<sup>1</sup> Hume does not as such deny the reality of the self, but rests with its non-apprehension. He himself admits to being uneasy with his conclusion<sup>2</sup> for while being unable to discover a self unifying experience, he observes that an identity is preserved through these complex, changing experiences.<sup>3</sup>

If Hume does not take the step of denying the reality of the self, it is taken within some Buddhist traditions. Thus Hume's 'bundle of perceptions' has been compared to the Buddhist analysis of the self into the five skhandas or constituents; form, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness, and the denial that the self can be associated with any one of these skhandas or indeed with the aggregate.<sup>4</sup> No less an authority than Suzuki declares, "there is no psychological substratum corresponding to the word 'self' (atman) as when we say a table we have something substantial answering to the sound, 'table'."<sup>5</sup> This conception

---

<sup>1</sup>David Hume, A Treatise on Human Nature, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford University Press, 1965), Book I, Part IV, Section VI, pp. 251ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 635.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the comment of Glyn Richards, that "Hume's misunderstanding arises from the assumption that the self is the name of something, an impression or entity. He seeks the entity which relates to the notion of consciousness or ego and when he fails to find it he is puzzled." Glyn Richards, "Conceptions of the Self in Wittgenstein, Hume and Buddhism: an analysis and comparison". The Monist, vol. 61, no. 1, 1978, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 48f. Cf. Susan L. Anderson, "The Substantive Center Theory versus the Bundle Theory", pp. 96-107 in the same issue.

<sup>5</sup>Suzuki Daisetz, "Self the Unattainable." The Eastern Buddhist (E.B.) new series, vol. III, no. 2, 1970, p. 3. For a comparison of Western Existentialist and Buddhist views of the self, see also Keiji Nishitani, "On the I-Thou Relation in Zen Buddhism", E.B. new series, vol. II, no. 2, 1969, pp. 71-87; D.H. Bishop, "Buddhist and Western Views of the Self", *ibid.*, pp. 111-123; S.R. Hopper, "The 'Eclipse of God' and Existentialist Mistrust", E.B. new series, vol. III, no. 2, 1970, pp. 46-70; Joan Stambaugh, "Time-Being; East and West", E.B. new series, vol. IX, no. 2, 1976,

of the self shows some resemblance to the view of Heidegger, and the similarity will be discussed after the fourth view is described.

4) The natural-organic self. In this view, the word 'self' refers to the individual as a psycho-physical unity, and a dualism of self and body is denied. The extreme view within this classification is the behaviourist position of B.F. Skinner for whom "mentalistic" concepts must be translated into statements about bodily behaviour and observable responses. In his view the self is used as a "hypothetical cause of action", an "originating agent within the organism" when we are unable to find elsewhere an explanation for a man's behaviour.<sup>1</sup> The self is a "repertoire of behaviour appropriate to a given set of contingencies".<sup>2</sup> In Gilbert Ryle's modifications of this extreme view, mental concepts are acknowledged to be useful, for they are really statements of dispositions to behave in particular ways.<sup>3</sup> A position in which mental activity is accorded some autonomy, but still within the view of the self as a psycho-somatic unity, is that of Strawson who declares,

What I mean by the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation etc. are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type.<sup>4</sup>

---

pp. 107-114; John Steffney, "Non-being-Being versus the Non-being of Being: Heidegger's Ontological Difference and Zen Buddhism", E.B. new series, vol. X, no. 2, 1977, pp. 65-75; A.H. Lesser, "Eastern and Western Empiricism and the 'no-self' theory", Religious Studies, vol. 15, no. 1, March 1979, pp. 55-64.

<sup>1</sup>B.F. Skinner, Science and Human Behaviour, (New York, The Free Press, 1965), p. 283.

<sup>2</sup>B.F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 199.

<sup>3</sup>The Concept of Mind (London: Hutchinson, 1949).

<sup>4</sup>P.F. Strawson, Individuals (London: Methuen University Paperback, 1964), p. 101. Cf. A.R. Peacocke, who, approaching the same problem from the side of the biologist says of a man that he is "one person



This view need not imply that mental processes are nothing more than physical events. Instead of beginning with two states, physical and mental with the consequent problem of how they are related, the unity of the self is assumed.

The question now is, into which category does an ecstatic view of selfhood fall? It might seem that, in emphasising the transcending of bodily boundaries, there is ultimately a denial of the self, consonant with the no-self paradigm. As has been noted above<sup>1</sup> both Heidegger and Buber reject the identification of the self with any aspect of the individual which may be thought to constitute the essence. This includes the identification of the self with consciousness, mind or body. Does this suggest a no-self, the emptiness at the centre of the carriage wheel referred to in the introduction to this thesis? It seems not, for neither philosopher denies the reality and particularity of the self. Their point is rather that the meaning of selfhood is to be found elsewhere than in the empirically observable individual. Apart from the first category above, in which the particularity of the finite self is ultimately denied, in the other three conceptions, the self is defined, whether as a bundle of perceptions, or as a network of behaviour, or as a mind, over against others. In other words the particularity of Being is equated with the individuation or separateness of Being. What marks off the concept of self as both Heidegger and Buber present it is that the Being of the self is constituted in relation to what is other than the individual. A being is 'particular', uniquely

---

possessing both physical and mental attributes, each explicated by appropriate sets of predicates". Science and the Christian Experiment, p.142.

<sup>1</sup> pp.13ff., pp.114ff.



itself only as it goes beyond its boundaries in the act of relating to what is other. Such a view raises several difficult questions. Is there a denial here of the reality of the individual body? Even if it is allowed that in some sense selves become themselves with others, are not they also identified by their separateness? Does the concept of self have any meaning if we dissociate it from the concept of mind or consciousness? These questions will be considered shortly, but first to complete the classification of self concepts, the notion of the self-in-relation will be described briefly, with an indication of the ontological ground that supports it.

5) The self-in-relation: Persons and Individuals. The distinction between 'person' and 'individual', used throughout the thesis, must now be sharpened, to make clear that with these two terms alternative ontologies are proposed. The word 'person' in particular has been used in many different senses, many of which refer to some aspect of the individual, such as his moral value, or his personality. In others, the word person is used for the individual who is 'growing' in creativity, love, and self-esteem. One may be more or less of a person, more or less of an individual as one is open to change in oneself.<sup>1</sup>

The word person as used in this thesis is not subject to degree in the above sense that one can be more or less of a person. It is not simply that two poles of selfhood are represented by the two words, person and individual, and that each 'self' is defined somewhere along the line between the two, although with some uses of the words this could well

---

<sup>1</sup>For a summary of some approaches to the concept of person, cf. Ralph Ruddock, ed., Six Approaches to the Person (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972); R.S. Downie and E. Telfer, Respect for Persons (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969); John H. Walgrave, Person and Society (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965).

be true. Used here, however, personhood is a term that can either be applied completely to a being, or not at all. The reason for this is that personhood has been linked here with ontology, and the concept of a 'partial' being seems contradictory. Either Being 'is' or it 'is' not at all. With the two words 'person' and 'individual', at least as presented by Buber, alternative ways of understanding Being are proposed. The 'individual' refers to the self which is defined with reference to its own boundaries, and is grounded in an ontology of 'substance'. 'Person' refers to the self which is defined in relation to what is beyond its boundaries and is grounded in an ontology of 'relation'.

The distinction between 'person' and 'individual' has been made by many philosophers, though even when not confused with 'individual', the relational character of 'person' has not always been chosen as the defining characteristic. Thus Jacques Maritain uses the two terms 'personality' and 'individual' to distinguish a "material pole" which "does not concern the true person but rather the shadow of a personality", and a "spiritual pole, which does concern true personality".<sup>1</sup> Amongst those who have employed the distinction but with a relational emphasis are Nicolas Berdyaev, John Macmurray and Karl Heim, whose views on personhood will be sketched here.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>The Person and the Common Good (London: Godfrey Bles, 1948), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Note should also be taken, amongst contemporary writers, of David Jenkins, The Glory of Man (London: SCM, 1967) and The Contradiction of Christianity (London: SCM, 1976). Also Wolfhart Pannenberg, whose contribution, "Person" to RGG (3rd. ed.) V, pp. 230-235, traces the development of a relational concept of the self. Cf. his Jesus, God and Man (London: SCM, 1968) pp. 179-183 where the same concept is explored in the context of Trinitarian doctrine.

Berdyaev, like Buber, sees two realms, that of objectification and that of existence and freedom, or as he also describes it, the realms of nature and spirit.<sup>1</sup> The person is the fulcrum between the two. There is in Berdyaev's philosophy a dualism, but he rejects a dualism of body and soul.

Dualism exists, not between soul and body, but between spirit and nature, between freedom and necessity. Personality is the victory of the spirit over nature, of freedom over necessity.<sup>2</sup>

Between the person and the objectifiable 'natural' world there is a discontinuity. "Man is a personality not by nature but by spirit. By nature he is only an individual."<sup>3</sup> Berdyaev argues that, when defined by reference to his own psycho-physical boundaries alone, man is unavoidably an individual, i.e. a part of the whole. But man as a person is a "microcosm, a complete universe ... a potential universe in an individual [i.e. a unique and repeatable] form".<sup>4</sup> This view corresponds to Buber's notion that in the I-Thou relation one encounters the Thou not as a part of the world, but as the totality.

Berdyaev does not rest with a dualism between spirit and nature, for his philosophy is intrinsically eschatological. He rejects the restriction of eschatological language to the theologian, and argues that philosophy itself can be eschatological, oriented towards the End.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Slavery and Freedom, (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1943), pp. 10f.  
Spirit and Reality (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939), pp. 4f.

<sup>2</sup>Slavery and Freedom, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. The Beginning and the End (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952), p. 51.



The objectifiable world is not set permanently over against the freedom of the existing self but is to be transformed; the central thought of "eschatological philosophy", he declares is connected with the "interpretation of the Fall as objectification, and of the end as the final and decisive victory over objectification".<sup>1</sup> Persons are crucial to this victory, which is to demonstrate the power of freedom over necessity. Communion between persons is to be the focus of transformation. "All society and all history are transfigured and liberated through humanity, through the supremacy of personality."<sup>2</sup> That transformation, or 'End' must not be understood as a historically datable, objectifiable event for that would be the very reverse of the movement of freedom which Berdyaev perceives to be at the heart of the eschaton. Using arguments similar to Buber's, he contrasts "existential" with "objective" or "historical" time and claims that the end is here when "objective" time is transformed into "existential" time. The 'end' is seen as the transformation of the "objective" world by the creative freedom of persons who resist causality.<sup>3</sup>

Against this belief similar questions to those posed to Buber can be asked; i.e. concerning the ontological status of the 'event' of transformation.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that Berdyaev's defence parallels Buber's with his use of the Kantian categories of the phenomenon and noumenon.<sup>5</sup> He talks of the "noumenal basis within the concrete life

---

<sup>1</sup>The Beginning and the End, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 233ff.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. above, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup>For Berdyaev's acknowledgement of his allegiance to Kant see Slavery and Freedom, p. 11.

of the world". Man is "not merely one of the phenomena in a world of objects. His noumenal essence remains in him. And in acts which take their rise from that noumenal essence he can change the world."<sup>1</sup> Thus Berdyaev, like Buber, believes that man can bring about the transformation of the 'objective' world because it is not self-sustaining but is subject to the 'existential' world. By changing the ways in which man relates to the world, so the world is changed. This for Berdyaev is not a claim for man per se but a recognition of his God-manhood.<sup>2</sup> By entering into communion with God, whose freedom is unbound by nature, man realises his true character and brings in the 'End'.<sup>3</sup>

Berdyaev describes his philosophy as "dualistically pluralist, creatively dynamic, personalist and eschatological".<sup>4</sup> It is a philosophy which reaches from its heart in the personal to the structures of space and time. His solution to the problem of freedom and necessity is that ultimately the realm of necessity is transformed. This, it could be said, is an ontological transformation, a transformation of reality.

Karl Heim, who also writes of the relation between persons and reality, seems to argue rather for an epistemological transformation, a transformation in the way in which reality is seen. Heim's primary interest is in wrestling with the meaning, within a scientific cosmology, of a transcendent God. Either the theologian uses such words as 'above' or 'beyond' with reference to God, and so betrays his distance from a

---

<sup>1</sup>The Beginning and the End, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

scientific way of conceiving space, or he must find a way of expressing transcendence in accordance with a modern scientific understanding of space.<sup>1</sup> Heim takes the latter course, and develops a doctrine of 'spaces' in which the I-It and the I-Thou relation form two dimensions of reality grounded in a third 'space', the space of the presence of God. The objective world of I-It is only one space "into which everything is fitted. There exists simultaneously a second space .... This is the non-objective space in which the I and the Thou encounter one another."<sup>2</sup> This second space is not an alternative to the first, but is coterminous. Heim uses the analogy of a two dimensional man who suddenly discovers a third dimension which has been 'there' all the time.<sup>3</sup> The paradox of the I-Thou 'space' is that it exhibits a polarity. "I am I only by virtue of not being you or anyone else", yet I need you to be myself.<sup>4</sup> Heim's solution to the problem is to posit an "archetypal" "suprapolar" 'space' which embraces these other 'spaces' and resolves the polarities inherent in them.<sup>5</sup> This archetypal space bears the presence of God, whose presence is not identical with 'objective' space or the 'I-Thou' space, but is nevertheless not divorced from them. There is the realisation that, "while we are encompassed on all sides by the temporal world, we stand at the same time even now in the midst of eternity and we are enclosed within the archetypal space of God".<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Christian Faith and Natural Science (London: SCM, 1953), p.165.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 161ff., p. 168.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 171.



For Heim there is indeed a transformation but it is of the understanding, not of reality. "My eyes are opened to the all-presence of the eternal world."<sup>1</sup> There is a disclosure of the eternal which forms the ultimate structure of reality.

In criticism, apart from John MacQuarrie's comment that it is "surely impossible to explicate the structure of personal existence in something so impersonal as space",<sup>2</sup> it seems that Heim has taken over the strand of Buber's thought in which God has a natural relation to the world rather than one of freedom. The critical 'distance' between God and world necessary if transformation is to be an ontological matter, is not maintained. It seems that the 'space of God' is co-terminous with other 'spaces'.

John Macmurray, while also committed to a relational concept of selfhood is far less concerned than Berdyaev or Heim to investigate the structures of the universe, but carefully analyses the meaning of the self as agent as opposed to the reflecting mind. His task is the teasing out of the meaning of person (as opposed to individual) through the mother-child relation--the "original unit of personal existence"--<sup>3</sup>through various possible societal relations with their effect on the self, to the idea of God as the "universal personal Other"<sup>4</sup> and to religion, defined tersely as "the celebration of communion--of the fellowship of all things in God".<sup>5</sup> Macmurray is at his best in

<sup>1</sup>Christian Faith and Natural Science, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup>Twentieth Century Religious Thought (London: SCM, 1963), p.208.

<sup>3</sup>Persons in Relation (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), p. 62.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

the wealth of detail with which he decorates his argument, and in the thoroughness with which he explores the facets of the personal. Thus the implications of the self as agent--the 'I do' as opposed to the 'I think'--are shown in discussions on the tension between involvement and withdrawal, on morality, on community as opposed to society. The painstaking character of his analysis is invaluable, and it is not so much a criticism as an observation to note that the cosmic and eschatological implications of personhood are lacking in Macmurray. For example, the threat posed by death to a selfhood constituted by relation, although mentioned by Macmurray is thought to be merely an example of the natural rhythm of withdrawal and return characteristic of any relationship. The fear of death, or the fear of isolation which in this scheme amounts to the same thing, is in his view under the impress of love, for fear, "as the negative, presupposes love and is subordinate to it".<sup>1</sup> This confidence in the power of love is perhaps grounded in Macmurray's starting point of action. It is from the standpoint of action that the new logical form--the form of the personal--emerges. This form is a unity in which the positive includes its own negative as a necessary dimension of itself.<sup>2</sup> The negative contained within action in Macmurray's terms is process. This notion is applied to the world which, from the standpoint of action is postulated not as a process but as an action.<sup>3</sup> The conclusion is to "think Reality as constituted by the inclusion of the unreal in its own being. Such a concept would then enable us to think the unity of the world without falling into dualism

---

<sup>1</sup>Persons in Relation, p. 70, cf. pp. 62f.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. The Self as Agent (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 48.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

or antimony."<sup>1</sup> And so, an "argument which starts from the primacy of the practical moves steadily in the direction of a belief in God."<sup>2</sup>

Although Macmurray himself does not state this explicitly, it would seem that death for him is subordinate to love and constrained by it ultimately because of God. Death is absorbed as the negative by the positive of love. In Macmurray's philosophy this is no eschatological hope but an existential reality of the freedom of persons in relation. The 'passivities' of existence, including death, are absorbed within action. It seems that the dialectic of love and death which provides the structure of this thesis is resolved in Macmurray's thought.

To return to the main theme, the point has been reached where some criticisms of the concept of persons in relation must be met. The question has been raised above<sup>3</sup> concerning the particular concreteness of the self constituted by relation. Is there not a danger of diffusing the centredness of the self to the point of extinction?

#### Particularity in Communion: an Ontology of Presence

The problem of particularity is highlighted by a quotation not from Buber's work but from John Macmurray. Thus--

Personality is mutual in its very being. The self is one term in a relation between two selves. It cannot be prior to that relation and equally, of course, the relation cannot be prior to it. 'I' exist only as one member of the 'you and I'. The self only exists in the communion of selves.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>The Self as Agent, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>3</sup>See above, p.157.

<sup>4</sup>Interpreting the Universe (London: Faber and Faber, 1933), p. 137.



Macmurray seems to strain logic here for in defining the 'self' as "one term in a relation between selves", he uses the very term he is defining. For this to make sense, 'self' must be used in two ways; the 'self' which relates and the 'self' constituted by the relation. What then, it seems reasonable to ask, is the meaning and nature of the 'self' prior to the relation? This is precisely the question which Macmurray (and Buber) seek to avoid with the claim that the relation and the self constituted by relation cannot be separated. Yet Macmurray himself does talk of a relation between two selves, suggesting that the poles of the relation do have a reality in themselves. Bradley's question as to the ontological status of a relation between two qualities A and B seems appropriate here, for he captures the dilemma. If, he asks, A is related to B by a relation C, what are we to understand here by the 'is'? If the relation C has an "independent" reality, as opposed to being an attribute of A or B, another relation, D, seems to be necessary to connect C to A and B. An infinite regression is the result. If on the other hand the relation does not have an independent reality, but is a property of A and B, what then is the connection between the two other than juxtaposition?<sup>1</sup> Bradley's conclusion is that "qualities must be, and must also be related .... Each has a double character, as both supporting and as being made by the relation."<sup>2</sup> Such a conclusion implies a contradiction within the meaning of Being, and since, to Bradley, "a relation without terms seems mere verbiage"<sup>3</sup> he affirms that "a relational

---

<sup>1</sup>F.H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality (London: Oxford University Press, 1897), pp. 17-29.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

way of thought ... must give appearance, and not truth."<sup>1</sup>

It must be admitted that if the particularity of A and B is defined by their separateness, then a relation between them cannot constitute or affect the Being of A and B, and the ontological status of the relation is indeed a problem. But what happens to Bradley's argument if his assumption that "a relation without terms is mere verbiage", is challenged, if relation is affirmed as the primary ontological category, and the being of 'substance' as such is questioned? Bradley's problem seems to be that he sees the need to ascribe reality in some sense both to the particulars A and B, and to the relation between them. But what if the particularity of A and B is given, not by their 'substantial' nature but by the relation between them?<sup>2</sup> This is not, of course to deny particularity to A and B, for an ontology without particularity is no ontology at all, but it is to question the equation of particularity with the objective, space-time body.<sup>3</sup>

The thrust of this thesis is that an alternative ontology is at least conceivable, an ontology in which beings are particular-- and therefore 'are' at all--not by reference to their physical presence but only in an ecstatic movement of communion. Thus, as John Zizioulas

---

<sup>1</sup>Appearance and Reality, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Bradley himself "recoils in horror" from the notion that the particularity of A is given solely by the relation to B. He is clear that whatever it means to say that A is in relation with B, "we do not mean that 'in relation with B' is A." Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Strawson, who while declaring that there can be no ontology without particularity, assumes as a principle that beings are spatio-temporal particulars. Individuals, p. 15, p. 126. This point is noted by John Zizioulas, "Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", SJT vol. 28, 1975, p. 415.

concludes, in this ontology, "communion does not threaten personal particularity, it is constitutive of it. Ontological identity therefore is to be found ultimately not in every 'substance' as such, but only in a being which is free from the boundaries of the 'self'".<sup>1</sup> What makes a being particular, i.e. uniquely itself and not to be confused with another self, is that it is in communion with others.

But this concept threatens our almost instinctive ontological assumption that particularity is to be equated with individuality. Surely what an entity 'is' can be defined only in terms of itself. It may also relate to other entities but by their very character as observably separate beings how can they be involved in the definition of what it 'is'? Furthermore, how can the uniqueness of the self be preserved if one is immersed in a network of relationships? If one 'is' no more than one's relationships, distinct uniqueness seems to be lost.

There is an assumption here that may not be true. It seems that concreteness and uniqueness is destroyed because it is assumed that the uniqueness as well as the unity of the self stems from individuality, or that which separates one from another. In the alternative ontology, the unity of the individual is not that which defines it as a self. Rather the self is defined by its uniqueness, and the uniqueness is not given by its own qualities or substance. Instead of the argument that one is unique because of one's separate individuality, here it is suggested that one is unique because one is in communion with others.<sup>2</sup> The self is a

---

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 409.

<sup>2</sup>If one is identified as oneself by reference to uniqueness rather than unity, light is shed on ethical debates such as, for example, the question of whether a brain-damaged person is a person at all or a 'vegetable'. If being a person depends on unity, then the answer surely is 'no'. But if the person is himself because he is unique, he may still be so loved as to be unique, and there uniqueness does not depend on the degree of



particular being as it loves and is loved, not because of its own nature. As was noted above, it is not that particularity is denied by this idea, for the particularity, the concrete uniqueness of the self, is indispensable for the event of communion, but neither can particularity be separated from that event. There is no denial that the self is present, but that presence is not compelling to the observer. The person wills freely to be present as he stands in relation to the other.<sup>1</sup> This is an ontology of 'presence'. It is not that a being is present and may relate to other present beings, but that what it means to be present is to be in relation.

At this point, perhaps the reader is left sympathising with Bradley and his comment that a relation without terms is 'mere verbiage', for it is difficult to conceive how the concept of self-in-relation can, as it were, get off the ground. Is it not circular to say that particularity is indispensable for the event of communion, but also that particularity is constituted by that event? This is the same problem to which attention was drawn at the beginning of the section, in which Macmurray appeared to use two senses of the self; the self which relates, and the self constituted by relation. Is there any way out of this dilemma? The difficulty is that, even if it is possible to conceive of a particularity constituted by communion, the standpoint from which this is conceived is of a being particularised also by a separate body. From this standpoint

---

consciousness of the individual. Cr. John Knox, Jr., who in a philosophical rather than ethical context, suggests that it does indeed make sense to say that the self can survive the death of its mind, in contradiction to most philosophers; "Can the Self Survive the Death of its Mind." Religious Studies, vol. 5; no. 1, 1969, pp. 85-97.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Heidegger's fusing of the two terms, 'being', (ousia) and 'presence' (par-ousia). BT, p. 47/25.

talk of particularity in communion seems to deny the concrete reality of the body which is undeniably separate, and exchange that reality for a particularity which, at best, is a nebulous meeting point of relationships. In other words materiality appears to be denied in an ontology of relation.

This is, of course, not the case. Enough was said in the analysis of Buber to show that the 'I' met the 'Thou' in his "concrete otherness". But for Buber, the embodiedness of the 'Thou' did not bring about division or separation. With his doctrine of Urdistanz he believed that space and time were neutral categories which could be either the bearers of an I-Thou relation, or be hardened into the separation of I-It.<sup>1</sup> As was shown, however, the difficulty is that the space-time body, though it may be the bearer of the ecstatic movement towards the 'Thou', is also, in that it dies, the bearer of separation. Thus it is not that as such relational selfhood is anti-material, burdened by a physical body. Rather it is that the body is the mode of expression of a particularity constituted in another way by communion. Herein lies the paradox and tragedy of personhood, that the body which bears man's capacity to identify himself in relation to what lies beyond him, is the same body which brings relationships to an end.<sup>2</sup>

#### Persons as Bodies: The Paradox of Presence-in-absence

What does it mean to acknowledge the embodiedness of identity, not grudgingly to avoid an unfashionable dualism, but wholeheartedly? It means to be aware strongly of the paradox that the thesis is exploring via Heidegger and Buber, the paradox of love and death, or presence and

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. above, pp. 121ff.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. above, pp. 145ff.

absence. This is a paradox which both philosophers have attempted to resolve by emphasising one or other pole. Both have argued for the free presence of the self, a presence without absence, but in so doing have ignored some of the implications of being a body. Heidegger argues for an ontology of presence in the face of absence, or death, but even within his own perspective it was shown in Chapter II that he avoids the death of the body. His argument for the free presence of the self depends on showing that the capacity to ex-sist is not negated by facticity. To do that, he equated death with dying and the fact of death as the end was made of little significance. So with the physical body. The embodiedness of the self is played down to the point of claiming explicitly that "Dasein is never at hand in space".<sup>1</sup> If he conceded the physical body as a dimension of man's Being, he would be unable to sustain an argument for the presence of the self other than physical presence, for all other dimensions such as the capacity to ex-sist would ultimately be reducible to their ground in physical presence. This follows from Heidegger's primary ontological assumption, that the Being of the self is defined in relation to the 'end'. If, at the end, there is no more than physical absence, so in life all other dimensions of the self can be reduced to physical presence.

Going beyond Heidegger's own perspective, it can be observed that in failing to consider love as an ontological phenomenon, he ignores the capacity of the body to transcend its boundaries. Buber, on the other hand, who also argues for an ontology of presence without

---

<sup>1</sup>BT, p. 419/368.



absence, concentrates on the capacity to transcend the boundaries of the body, but at the cost of ignoring the body in its weakness. He ignores the fact that the body dies, and therefore also the person. He understands 'presence' in an immediate, spontaneous sense, as opposed to the 'absence' characterising the I-It relation. For him, the only alternative to the immediate presence in the I-Thou encounter is I-It, but do these two poles truly summarise existence? Are there not also moments in the meeting of two persons, where the separateness of their bodies expresses not the absence characterising the I-It relation, but the lack of presence characterising I-Thou? They may long to be present to each other, that is personally present in communion as opposed to being simply physically present, but for some reason there is a barrier to their freedom to relate. There is here a mutual isolation which however cannot be seen as an example of an I-It relation, for there is a longing for I-Thou. As was noted in Chapter III<sup>1</sup> the error in much of Buber's writings is that he assumes free, personal presence as a fully realisable possibility now. A position which seems more true to the tension between presence and absence, love and death, is that 'presence' as the immediate love between persons is possible for us only in a mode of absence such as in the example of the cafe cited in Chapter III<sup>2</sup>.

As John Zizioulas comments on Sartre's example:

When ... I have an appointment in a cafe with a friend whose existence matters to me, and on my arrival there I discover that this person is not there, the absent person, precisely by not being there occupies for me the entire space-time context of the cafe.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Pp. 125ff.

<sup>2</sup>Pp. 141f.

<sup>3</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity, p. 413.

He goes on to illustrate the presence-in-absence concept from art and history arguing that through the creative shaping of space and materials in art, personal presence is expressed, for the person is unbound by these dimensions. Similarly man's capacity for history expresses personal presence in that he can transcend the boundaries of time.

The already given in terms of events -- the 'past'-- does not produce an irresistible causality for man .... The 'events' created by man through history bear the seal of freedom that is inherent in personhood.<sup>1</sup>

However, the 'presence' of persons in art or history is still realised in 'absence'. To use an example which Zizioulas himself does not, a stone age axe head made in flint portrays the presence of the sculptor in something material, even though the person is physically absent. This personal presence through the stone would not be enhanced if it were possible for the stone age man to be actually present. The artwork demonstrates a presence-in-absence. Similarly the capacity to mould the past by continually re-writing history cannot overcome the facticity of the past, nor the fact that we are divided from it in time. The writing of history shows the capacity to transcend the boundaries of time, but only in weakness, in the awareness of death.<sup>2</sup>

The presence-in-absence paradox has been introduced as

---

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 418.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. John Zizioulas, op. cit., pp. 413-418 for the development of these themes. Cf. Erich Fromm, who sees art as one of the ways in which man seeks to overcome his separateness and isolation, by uniting himself with the material he is working on. For Fromm, this unity is false because it is not interpersonal. He finds the answer to the problem of separation in the achievement of interpersonal union, in love; The Art of Loving (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975), pp. 21f. But, lacking an eschatological perspective, Fromm has to maintain that the love of persons solves the problem of separateness. The argument of this then is that human love, threatened by death, cannot in itself overcome the problem.



a way of expressing the freedom of the self in the face of death, which indeed has been a guiding problem for the thesis as a whole. It has been suggested that both Heidegger and Buber argue for an ontology of presence, but at the cost of denying some aspects of being a body. Buber's ignoring of physical death as a limit to personhood is a denial of the body in its weakness. Heidegger's ignoring of love as constitutive of the self is also a denial of the body in its capacity to transcend its boundaries. By saying that persons are bodies (not, have bodies, or exist 'in' bodies), the paradox of presence and absence is affirmed. It is not that man is both a person and a body. Rather, as body, he is particularised, made unique, made present in communion with other persons. For human persons, love, which makes us ourselves, is an embodied love. It is not that the body forms a part of man, but that as a psycho-physical whole, the body is the mode of expression of a self constituted by communion.<sup>1</sup> This explains why death poses such a threat to personhood, for the presence of the person is inseparable from its mode of expression, the mortal body.

One final point must be made to classify further the understanding of persons as bodies. It is not being claimed that the only way personhood can be expressed is as a body, but only that human

---

<sup>1</sup>In this way two positions regarding the self are avoided. On the one hand, the reduction of the self to the psycho-physical body is avoided, for this view ignores man's ecstatic character. On the other, a dualistic approach in which the self as mind, spirit or soul, is separated from the organic body is avoided. It has been noted above that the relational view of the self tends towards the latter position, with the apparent dissolution of the self into a non-material, nebulous complex of relations. This, it has been suggested is a misunderstanding of the concept of person under discussion.



personhood is so expressed,<sup>1</sup> Throughout the last two chapters the claim has been that the particularity of persons is given in relation to other persons, and that personal presence is therefore not bound by the physical presence of the spatio-temporal body. In saying now that for human personhood the mode of expression is the body, this claim is not being denied, but simply that human personhood exhibits a paradox of presence-in-absence. Both communion and separation are expressed by the embodiedness of human persons.

In introducing the qualifier 'human' to personhood, the purpose is to leave open the possibility of understanding God in terms of personhood. Clearly, if the particularity of Being requires a body this leads to a theological dilemma. As John Zizioulas notes, in that case, "Either God's particularity is also one determined by space and time (by a 'body'), or it is impossible to attribute particularity to God at all, in which case it is also impossible to attribute ontology to him; we are simply forced to say that he is not." His conclusion is that the only way out of such a dilemma is "to admit the possibility of a particularity which is not determined by space and time, i.e. by circumscribability or, in other words by individuality." Thus, "even when it is determined by a body (as in the case of man) the person is particular only when its presence is constituted in freedom from its boundaries as a being which is particular because it is unique and indispensable in the context of communion."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Strawson, who does insist that the only way that Being can be particularised is as a spatio-temporal body. Individuals, pp. 59ff., p. 15, p. 126. Cf. above, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 415, note 1. Perhaps Zizioulas could have qualified his conclusion a little. Given the understanding of the self as relational, the conclusion follows, but in an alternative ontology in which a dichotomy between an 'essential' self and the body was posited, the body would be as inessential for man to be man as it is for God.

## CONCLUSION;

## IS THE CONCEPT OF GOD IMPLICIT IN PERSONHOOD?

The tension between love and death has been explored in this thesis, and the close connection between that tension and the concept of selfhood has been indicated. The theme of presence-in-absence has been used to express two aspects of existence, both of which seem constitutive of the self, if the original premise is accepted, namely that the self can be defined in relation to what lies beyond its psycho-physical boundaries. The purpose of the presence-in-absence concept was to show that personal presence differs from physical presence in that the presence of persons is ultimately a matter of love and freedom. Again in the words of John Zizioulas:

... the presence of personal beings ... is not established on the basis of a given 'nature' of the being but of love and freedom: persons can neither be particular--and thus be at all--by way of a nature compelling them to 'be' so, nor be present, i.e. recognised as being there, by compelling us to recognise them.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly we have not reached a resting place with this paradox. As was argued in the criticism of Heidegger in Chapter II, an ontology of presence cannot be based on an ultimate absence.<sup>2</sup> 'Presence' indicates that the destiny of the self is towards life, rather than death. But, of course, there is no question, given the framework of this thesis, of denying the reality of death and its power to influence the meaning of the self. If the embodiedness of persons is accepted, then death threatens the self. It seems that, for the relational concept of the self to be coherent, it

---

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 414.

<sup>2</sup>See above, pp. 87ff.

must include a hope for 'pure' presence, presence-without-absence. From what has been said above it should be understood that this does not mean an escape from the body. Rather it would be a hope that the structures of space and time themselves would be transformed so that the body supported the free presence of persons. The body then, far from serving to separate and divide persons, would signify their difference from each other. This difference would still be maintained for there can be no denying of unique particularity and the particularity of human persons is expressed in the body.<sup>1</sup>

It seems then, that an eschatological perspective is implicit in the concept of personhood, for it appears that the 'ecstatic' character of man is not satisfactorily explained if death is the boundary of existence. In his ecstatic capacity he seeks to transcend every boundary. However, if it is true that the body is the mode of existence of human persons and not simply a 'part' of man separable from an 'essential' personhood, then the self has no natural capacity to transcend the death of the body. Therefore, if presence-without-absence is the destiny of persons, and without which presence-in-absence is meaningless, the concept of God appears to be involved in the definition of the self as person. The freedom which characterises the presence of persons is possible only because its source is ultimately not the human 'Thou' but God. John Zizioulas argues that if there is ultimately no personal presence-without-absence, then there is no personal presence at all, and that the very use of the word 'presence' becomes "arbitrary and in the end meaningless." Where, he asks, have we got the category

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. above, pp. 141f., and p. 122 for the contrast between division and difference.



of presence from when we apply it to personhood?

Is it an extrapolation or an analogy from the experience of the presence of objects as they are observed and recognised through our senses or minds? But the presence of which we are talking in the case of personhood is the very opposite of this experience .... It is, therefore, impossible to regard the experience of the actual world as the source of the category of presence in the paradox presence-in-absence. And if that is the case, then there are only two alternatives before us. Either what we call presence is an arbitrary use of a category which in this case bears no ontological significance whatsoever and which will prove the empiricist right in calling this kind of presence sheer fantasy. Or if we wish to disagree with the empiricist and attack an ontological significance to the presence of the presence-in-absence paradox, we shall have to admit that presence in this case points to an ontology which does not ultimately depend on the experience of this world. Those who accept this paradox as pointing authentically and ontologically to personal existence are not as far as they may think from an implicit assumption of God.<sup>1</sup>

We must be careful not to claim too much with this argument. It is not that the concept of God is implicit in anthropology but that this anthropology demands a concept of God as personal presence without absence, unless it is fantasy. Others however have made the inclusive claim. Wolfhart Pannenberg for instance argues that certain phenomena, particularly man's "openness to the world", and his "infinite dependence" lead us to presuppose "something outside himself

---

<sup>1</sup>Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 421. Clearly, some conceptions of God are incompatible with the freedom of personal presence. For example it was noted in Chapter III that, to the extent that Buber identifies the world with God, he removes all hope of a transformation of the space-time structures, in which presence-without-absence would be a reality. (Above pp. 127f.; cf. p. 139). God, if he is the source of 'pure' presence, cannot also be understood as the ultimate basis for the world 'as it is', i.e. a world characterised by separation, division and the final 'absence' of death.

that is beyond every experience of the world".<sup>1</sup> Pannenberg's intention is to show that for an anthropology to be coherent, the concept of God has to be included in the definition of man, so that one is not really considering man if one ignores this dimension.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the vulnerability of this position to Feuerbach's critique of religious projection, and its emphasis on 'openness' to the neglect of the paradoxical 'closeness' of man, it does not allow that other anthropologies are coherent. John Zizioulas, on the other hand, as indicated in the passage quoted above<sup>3</sup> does concede that an alternative ontology is possible, viz one in which 'presence' is ultimately reducible to physical presence. A similar view is advocated in this thesis. The claim here is that, if the concept of self as person-in-relation is accepted, and if the presence-in-absence paradox is accepted as the way in which the freedom of personal presence is expressed in the human situation, then the concept of God is implied by this anthropology.

This does not exclude other ways of understanding the meaning of the self, but if the relational view of the self is rejected, other attempts must grapple at least as seriously with the inter-relation of love and death. Other concepts of the self have already been outlined in this chapter. The question of what enables a choice to be made between them must finally be faced. The connection between selfhood and ontology has been shown throughout this thesis. It is

---

<sup>1</sup>What is Man? (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), pp. 3ff.; p. 9. Cf. "Anthropology and the Question of God", and "Speaking about God in the face of Atheistic Criticism", Basic Questions in Theology (London: SCM, 1973), Vol. III, especially, pp. 91f., p. 104, 106.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Basic Questions, vol. III, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup>See above, p. 178.



therefore not simply a choice between views of the self, but a fundamental question of what 'is' at all. It seems that the answer to the question of what it means to be oneself depends finally on whether the 'givenness' of the past and the present is accepted as the only basis for ontology in which case death must be taken as a dimension of man, and of the self; or the tension between presence and absence, love and death, is taken as an indication that the existence of man cannot be explained fully from within existence, but only ultimately by reference to an extra-human reality.

Put briefly the options available on the question of love and death vis à vis the self are:

1) the acceptance of both love and death as dimensions of existence, and of the self, but with no expectation of a resolution of the tension. This position would accord with a view of the self as a psycho-somatic unity. The self relates to others, but in the end the self is made nothing by death. This view also accords with the idea that the self is 'more than' the body, i.e. an immaterial self, but is dependent on the body.

2) the denial of the power of death to limit the self. Buber's 'immediate' presence of the self in relation comes into this category, for the self is outside time and untouched by death. Also, any view which proposes the survival of the self, as mind or consciousness or soul, without the body ultimately denies the reality of death.

3) the denial of love as a dimension of the being of the self. On this view, represented in this thesis by Heidegger, the reality of death is so overbearing that it stifles all other dimensions of existence, and leads at best to the self made an individual by the relation to his death.



4) death is seen as a negation of a selfhood constituted by love. Death therefore is not viewed as a dimension of existence which can free one to be oneself. Its power to confine the self is to be resisted. The existence of both love and death is seen as a paradox which points to a final resolution with the defeat of death. Implicit in this view of the self is an eschatological hope for the transformation of the structures of existence producing death.

The conclusion of this thesis is that a choice between these views rests in the end on whether it is accepted that death forms part of the definition of man. If death is unacceptable for man it seems that, given that death appears inescapable for all of us, the only appropriate stance is that of Dylan Thomas who does not go quietly to the grave, but 'rages against the dying of the light'. The only appropriate stance, that is, in the lack of any evidence to show that death will not go on for ever. For 'evidence' of the possibility that death may be defeated, the philosopher is at a loss. Could it not be that death does go on for ever? The above analysis cannot answer that question. Instead of answers, the analysis has produced questions. Are the paradoxes of love and death, presence and absence, irreconcilable? If the philosopher sets himself the task of producing a descriptive ontology, these questions seem unanswerable, although there have been suggestions in the thesis that the philosopher, as philosopher, need not restrict himself to a descriptive ontology. If he ponders on the ontological ground for the meaning of 'presence' in the presence-in-absence paradox, he may find an analysis of existence itself which commends an 'ecstatic' ontology taking him beyond the 'actual'.

At this point the enquiry could end, with the conclusion that at least one way of being oneself is to exist in the tension of love and death, neither denying the reality of one nor the other. However, the suggestion has been made in the closing pages that the paradoxes of love and death, presence and absence, point towards an extra-human reality, the source of pure presence and love, an ultimate resource of personal Being. In the final chapter the remit of the theologian to bring an extra-human reality to bear on questions of existence will be considered. The intention is not to present theological speculations as though they might provide simple answers to the philosophical problems encountered above. Rather, it is to indicate that some theology is concerned with these same problems and that it has a valid contribution to make to them, admittedly from a different starting point than the philosopher analysing existence phenomenologically.

## CHAPTER V

### THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PERSONHOOD

It was suggested at the end of the last chapter that the concept of God as presence-without-absence is implicit in this presentation at least of the relational concept of personhood. The task of this final chapter is to ask briefly what theological concepts would be compatible with personhood, and how, if at all, they could resolve the paradox of presence-in-absence.

The theological remarks that follow should not be seen as a diversion from the primary task of the thesis, to investigate the meaning of a relational concept of the self. The theological concepts to be outlined, far from being separate from anthropology, are the ground of it, in the sense that the concept of man as developed here cannot be understood in separation from the concept of God. Put simply, it will be suggested that man is man not simply in relation to his fellow man but ultimately in relation to God. The suggestion that man is defined in relation to God should not come as a surprise to readers with a Christian theological perspective, and yet within Western traditions as opposed to the Eastern Orthodox with its doctrine of theosis, a considerable division is posited between God and man. If man is defined by reference to himself, any relationships he enters into are extrinsic to his Being. The argument of this thesis points in a very different direction. The final extension of the notion that the self is truly itself in relation to what is other is that the self is in relation to God. As was noted at the end of



chapter III,<sup>1</sup> I-Thou relationships with other mortal persons cannot be the ultimate ground of the freedom from being identified by one's location as a spatio-temporal body; for the I-Thou relation is expressed by bodies which die. What is needed, it was suggested, is some view of identity in which 'death is swallowed up in victory', in which physical death does not annihilate the person because his identity is in a body not bound by space and time but which is nevertheless real.<sup>2</sup>

### A Reconciliation of Love and Death?

Before considering the contribution which theology might make to this problem of embodiedness, and of presence-in-absence, one objection must be met. Could it not be argued, on theological grounds themselves, as well as others, that being oneself means finding some reconciliation between love and death? Could it not be that we are persons who in I-Thou relationships are given freedom to be ourselves, but that this freedom is bounded by death? Indeed, to put the case more strongly, could it not be that love is only love in the company of death? Such an argument would certainly accord with the position of some existential psychologists. For example, Rollo May suggests that love is defined by its ending:

Death is always in the shadow of the delight of love ....  
 The most excruciating joy is accompanied by the consciousness  
 of the imminence of death, and with the same intensity. And  
 it seems that one is not possible without the other ....  
 Abraham Maslow is profoundly right when he wonders whether we  
 could love passionately if we knew we'd never die ....  
Love is not only enriched by our sense of mortality but  
constituted by it.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> p.138.

<sup>2</sup> above p 143. cf W.Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology (London, SCM 1973) vol III p 114. "Since in the end my fellow man is ultimately as dependent as I am upon the gift of freedom, the 'thou' of my fellow man cannot be the ultimate basis of freedom."

<sup>3</sup> Rollo May, Love and Will (London: Collins Fontana Library, 1972), pp. 101f., my italics.

The anthropological assumption behind this position, explored by Norman O. Brown in Life Against Death,<sup>1</sup> is that the way of wholeness for man lies in some reconciliation of love and death, and that the attempt to deny the power of either is a denial of a dimension of man, without which he would not be fully himself. Brown's argument will be considered here in some detail for it enables the theological implications of accepting death to be taken further.

In his analysis of Freud and the post-Freudians, Brown shows that Freud postulated an irreconcilable conflict between love and death, "grounded in the very nature of life itself."<sup>2</sup> Brown's view is that to accept this duality is to concede that man is in a state of sickness, in which either the instinct for love or for death is repressed. For Brown, man cannot be whole unless he can be freed from repression, and he cannot be free until he ceases to repress the awareness of death. According to Brown, man has attempted to fight death by his creation of "immortal cultures" and by "making history."<sup>3</sup> Religion, too, has been used to deny the power of death:

The ultimate defect of all heavens with immortality beyond the grave is that in them there is no death; by this token such visions betray their connection with repression of life.<sup>4</sup>

Again;

... the Christian heaven exists to solve problems not soluble on earth; and since it postulates immortality in heaven, its psychological premise is the impossibility<sup>5</sup> of reconciling life and death either on earth or in heaven.

---

<sup>1</sup> (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1959).

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

In contrast to the idea of immortality after death, Brown argues that the resurrection of the body expresses the Christian hope for the abolition of repression, a "resurrected body which the Christian creed promises would want to die because it was perfect."<sup>1</sup> Thus the perfect body, according to Brown, is a body reconciled with death. This body would be transfigured, for;

... the abolition of repression would abolish the unnatural concentrations of libido in certain particular bodily organs, concentrations engineered by the negativity of the morbid death instinct .... The human body would become polymorphously perverse, delighting in that full life of all the body which it now fears. <sup>2</sup>

The repressive power of death would no longer have sway over the body, for there would be no attempt to deny death as a part of life. His conclusion is that, "In the last analysis Christian theology must either accept death as part of life or abandon the body."<sup>3</sup>

It would seem that within the Judeo-Christian tradition there is a resistance to the former alternative, that death is a 'given' for man. In the Genesis story of the Fall, one of the themes is that death is a result of man's turning from God. It seems that, for the compiler of the story, physical death for the whole creation was a consequence of the severing of the relationship between man and God. Yet even at the level of the meaning of the story, without considering any connection between it and cosmology, this interpretation has been questioned. Thus Eichrodt in his Theology of the Old Testament argues, in a very Heideggerian way, that in the story of the Fall, it is not the

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 309.



"simple fact of dying which is here proclaimed as the punishment of sin but the enslavement of all life to the hostile powers of death - suffering, pain, toil, struggle - by which it is worn out before its time."<sup>1</sup>

Eichrodt suggests that for the compiler of the text, Adam would have died even if he had not sinned, but that by his disobedience he became enslaved to death. Freedom would then mean the capacity to face one's death as a dimension of the Being of man. How similar this is to Heidegger's theme that man is 'thrown' as Being-towards-death, but that freedom consists in not being alienated from oneself by death. Put another way, this position would appear to suggest that death is a result not of sin but of createdness.

Karl Rahner adopts a similar position concerning the involvement of death in the definition of man when he declares that death is a "natural event", and that Adam, even had he not sinned, would not have "lived on endlessly in the bodily life of this world" but would have "brought his personal life to its perfect consummation .... through a "death" which would have been a pure, active self-affirmation".<sup>2</sup>

Criticism of the notion that death is an activity, or a final decision, has already been made.<sup>3</sup> Is not death as the end completely beyond the power of the existing self? It was noted in the discussion

---

<sup>1</sup>Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament (London SCM 1967) vol.II p. 406.

<sup>2</sup>On the Theology of Death, (New York, Herder and Herder 1972) p. 34. To be fair to Rahner, it should be noted that he recognises a dual character in death, i.e. "that there is in every human being a real ontological feature which contradicts death", and so this "Catholic doctrine concerning the natural element in death does not mean that the actual death which each of us will die may be looked upon as a natural process, as though death could be neutralized". Ibid. p. 37. For the range of attitudes to death within theology cf. John Hick, Death and Eternal Life; for a brief summary cf. N.D. O'Donoghue, "Sister Death", The Furrow vol.29 no.5, 1978 pp 274-293.

<sup>3</sup>cf. above p. 89.

of Heidegger that even if death is accepted as one of the 'passivities' of existence, an aspect of 'thrownness' without which man would not be man, serious theological implications follow. In particular an acceptance of death as an aspect of the definition of man seems to imply that death is part of God's intention for man, and for the rest of his creation, and that for this feature God should be praised.<sup>1</sup> The ontological assumption in this position is that for an understanding of the Being of man, the empirical world, in which death is clearly present, is the only 'given' from which an ontology can be constructed. This assumption might well be acceptable to some theologians, and could accord with other notions of the self, but from the perspective of the particular relational concept under discussion it seems unacceptable for two reasons at least.

The first problem has already been raised in Chapter IV, concerning the ground of personal presence. If, as has been argued, the freedom of persons requires the capacity to be present to one another without coercion rather than through compelling necessity, how can the body whose horizon is death supply this ground? If death determines man's Being, then it seems that he has no alternative than to be present as a compelling physical presence. Yet it has been suggested that personal (i.e. free) presence is a possibility, albeit in the strange mode of 'absence', when the person though physically present withholds himself, or when though physically absent, is personally present.<sup>2</sup> How then has the concept of 'presence' arisen? It will be recalled from Chapter IV that this question is raised by John Zizioulas, who argues that to be applicable to human personhood, the category of presence cannot have come by analogy from the experience of objects as they are observed and recognised by

---

<sup>1</sup>cf. above p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>pp. 141ff.



our sense and minds. Such a presence is the very opposite of personal presence. He concludes that it is impossible to regard the experience of the actual world as the source of the category of presence in the presence-in-absence paradox. In the face of this he sees two alternatives. Either 'presence' must be abandoned as an ontological category, which would mean that man could only be objectively present; or it must be admitted that the reality of personal presence "points to an ontology which does not depend on the experience of this world."<sup>1</sup> The fact that personal presence and love are possibilities, although in a mode of absence, is an indication that there is for man a horizon of presence-without-absence.

The second observation which suggests that a reconciliation of love and death cannot be a theological terminus, given the relational concept of personhood, is made by Herbert Marcuse. Like Brown, Marcuse's search, in Eros and Civilization, is for an unrepressed existence. He declares that if the significance of death lies not in its character as the end of life, but as the end of pain, then "the conflict between life and death is the more reduced, the closer life approximates the state of gratification."<sup>2</sup> Yet even if it is possible to exist oneself without repression, accepting death, and to hope for a future in which the repressive power of death will diminish, there remains the problem of those who in the past have died in pain:

Not those who die, but those who die before they must and want to die, those who die in agony and pain, are the great

---

<sup>1</sup> John Zizioulas, "Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", SJT vol. 28 1975, p. 421.

<sup>2</sup> H. Marcuse, Eros and Civilisation (London: Sphere Books, 1969), p. 187. For a good comparison of Brown and Marcuse see Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture (London: Faber & Faber, 1970), pp. 84ff.



indictment against civilisation. They also testify to the unredeemable guilt of mankind. Their death arouses the painful awa~~re~~ness that it was unnecessary, that it could have been otherwise .... Even the ultimate advent of freedom cannot redeem those who died in pain. It is the remembrance of them, and the accumulated guilt of mankind against its victims, that darken the prospect of civilisation without repression.<sup>1</sup>

Marcuse concludes that a philosophy which is not to work as the "handmaiden of repression" must respond to the fact of death with the "Great Refusal".<sup>2</sup>

Although unable to articulate an explicit theology himself, Marcuse has surely introduced an alternative theological option to those which Brown offered. According to Brown, the only alternative to the acceptance of death as a dimension of man is a flight from death into heaven in the 'next' world which, he comments, is to "abandon the body". Yet Marcuse's refusal to forget those who have died in the past in pain, is both an expression of unrest with the world 'as it is', and at the same time a refusal to justify the pain of the past by reference to a glorious future. It is the 'fixity' of the past which criticises all hope of free and unrepressed existence in the present and future. The absence of those in the past menaces our identity in the present. Marcuse is unable to go further than to express his refusal to consent to death, for to him the past is unredeemable. It would seem that if a theological statement is to meet Marcuse's point, it would have to show that the past is in some way not fixed, but open to transformation.<sup>3</sup>

It now can be made clearer why Buber's account of personal identity is inadequate. Buber can offer no hope for the past, for there is no particular time or place in history at which God has touched

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>cf. Elizabeth Templeton, "On Undoing the Past", (unpublished paper delivered to the Society for the Study of Theology, York, 1979) where the connection between the Irenean doctrine of 'Recapitulation' and the  
ed.

the world. Buber challenges Christian theologians to show why suffering still takes place in a world which is supposed to have been redeemed; and yet if Buber's hope is only in a God who is still to come, there can be no compensation for the suffering of the past, and indeed for this present which becomes past.<sup>1</sup>

Two problems have been raised, both connected with the freedom of personhood, which seem to require a rejection, on theological grounds, of an ontology in which death is accepted as a condition of man being himself. In the first, the freedom to be personally present seems to require some way of being a body which does not force the recognition of oneself by another. In the second, the question is raised whether, on grounds of theodicy, the presence of persons implies being free from the limitations of a particular space and time. The argument up to this point has been that a relational concept of personhood implies both that personal presence is not defined by a particular space-time context and that for man personal presence is embodied. These implications are in conflict given the present spatio-temporal structures leading to death, for death allows only one of these implications, viz. the mortal embodiedness of persons. The acceptance of death as a condition of man being himself would resolve that conflict, but it has been maintained throughout this thesis that personal existence is faithfully portrayed only when the conflict between freedom and necessity is acknowledged.

The problem set for this final chapter is whether any theological themes offer the hope of an ultimate resolution without denying the present dilemma. All that can be done at the end of an inquiry concerned with a philosophical issue is to provide the simplest

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. above, p. 132, note 1.

agenda for further research. The concern, as stated at the beginning of the chapter, is to suggest theological concepts which might be compatible with a relational personhood and how, if at all, they could resolve the paradox of presence-in-absence. Two questions can be isolated, crucial for the coherence of a relational personhood. These are drawn from the issues raised in Chapter IV, on personhood and the body.

1). Can persons be particularised, i.e. uniquely themselves without being particularised in any way by individual 'natures'? What can counter Strawson's insistence that the only way Being can be particularised is as a spatio-temporal body, for throughout the analysis of existence, even if the identity of the person is constituted in communion, he is also identified as an individual by the spatio-temporal body?<sup>1</sup> Is embodiedness inseparable from the concept of person? If so, then not only is the paradox of presence-in-absence irreconcilable, but the application of personhood to God is not possible. To avoid the conclusion that only bodies are persons, it would have to be shown that it makes sense to talk of persons being particularised by communion, without in any way being identified by an individual 'nature' in distinction to other individual 'natures'.

2). Even if it can be shown that the concept of personhood without a body makes sense, it has been argued above that in man personhood is embodied. Is there any way of being embodied which does not enable the person to be individualised by his body?

Though perhaps not immediately recognisable as the classical concerns of theology, these questions do indeed bear on theological problems and to go further, are they not among the questions to which

---

<sup>1</sup> see above pp. 170ff.



theologians have continually sought answers? In particular, the Trinitarian and Christological debates in the Church can be viewed in part as attempts to wrestle with precisely such questions. The struggle by the Church Fathers, and by theologians ever since, to find a formula reconciling the personhood of Father, Son and Holy Spirit without lapsing into the Tri-theism of three individuals reflects the struggle in this thesis to articulate the particularity of the person without basing that particularity on his individual 'nature'. The second question, concerning the embodiedness of personhood in man and how persons can avoid being circumscribed by the spatio-temporal body, is one which bears on the Christological debates. How could a particular, bodily man whose birth and death could be determined with some accuracy be, from all eternity, the second person of the Trinity? And, to put the same question in a soteriological setting, if the presence of that man was limited by his spatio-temporal body, what ontological effect could his life and death have on those who lived at different times and places?

In the following pages no attempt will be made to examine in any depth the history of these complex debates nor to compare the many and varied interpretations of the Trinity and Christology. It is not intended to try to solve one set of problems connected with personhood by means of another complex debate fraught with its own network of problems. The purpose of what follows is simply to indicate that some lines of Trinitarian and Christological thought suggest fruitful approaches to the problems left by the existential analysis, whereas others do not. In this selection of some theological viewpoints, no judgement of relative values is intended. They are chosen simply for the fact of their correlation with the philosophical concept of person under examination. It should not be imagined from that selection that

the relational view of the self is here proposed as the final arbiter of the validity of the Trinitarian and Christological concepts. The question of what validates theological concepts is itself open to debate, but by whatever canons, whether it be scripture, the authority of the Church Fathers, Tradition etc., the relational concept of personhood would also require testing against such authorities<sup>1</sup>.

What contribution, then, can theology make in the Trinitarian and Christological debates to the two questions isolated i.e. particularity without individuality, and embodiedness without individuality?

#### Particularity without Individuality; the Doctrine of the Trinity

The difficulty recurring throughout the thesis has been that even if a person is particularised, made uniquely himself, in communion with other persons, he is also particularised by his individual 'nature'. This problem was shared by the Fathers who attempted to defend the distinct particularity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit without individualising them as three 'natures' or essences. In the language of the third and fourth centuries, there were three persons but only one essence or substance, three hypostases and one ousia. One of their difficulties, as it is here, was that as far as sense observations are concerned three

---

<sup>1</sup> Though beyond the scope of this thesis it would be interesting, for example, to compare the relational view of selfhood with Biblical views of the self such as the notion of corporate personality as interpreted by H. Wheeler Robinson et al. In the area of patristics, the influence on the Fathers of presupposed concepts of the self could be examined. How much, for instance, has the 'psychological' model of the Trinity affected concepts of the person in Trinitarian discussion? And how justifiable is the claim, made by C. C. J. Webb in his remarkable book, God and Personality, that the philosophical use of 'person' is founded in its theological use, rather than the reverse? God and Personality, (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1918), p. 46.



persons do signify three individualised 'natures'. As Augustine put the problem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are three men, not one man. Why then in God should there not be three essences rather than one?<sup>1</sup> Such unity as may be perceived between three men or women is contrary to the conceived unity of the members of the Trinity.

Clearly the meaning of the concept of unity is crucial to the question of whether the Trinity can be the ultimate resource for particularity without individuality, as indeed it was a crucial question for the Church Fathers. Committed, from the Hebrew tradition, to a belief in the oneness of God, the church had to adapt its theology to accommodate the claims that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Spirit also is God. This required an interpretation of 'unity' appropriate to God, a unity in which oneness and threeness were not mutually exclusive.<sup>2</sup>

Karl Rahner, in his recent book on the Trinity, claims that "Christians" have never taken seriously the tripersonal character of God and are "almost mere 'monotheists'".<sup>3</sup> By "Christians" he means those adopting an "Augustinian-Western conception of the Trinity .... It begins with the one God, the one divine essence as a whole and only afterwards does it see God as three in persons". This approach he contrasts with "The Bible and the Greeks (who) would have us start from the one unoriginate God, who is already Father even when nothing is known as yet about generation and spiration".<sup>4</sup> This is not the place to discuss the

---

<sup>1</sup>Augustine of Hippo, The Trinity, translated by Stephen McKenna, (Washington, The Catholic University of America Press 1963). Bk. 7.4 p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of the problem of unity in the Trinitarian debate, and the influence on it of Aristotle's analysis of unity, see H. A. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Fathers (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1970), vol. 1 pp 305-363.

<sup>3</sup>The Trinity translated by J. Donceel, (New York, Herder and Herder, 1970), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 17.



accuracy of that generalisation, in every case, but simply to note two approaches to the unity of the Trinity; the one beginning with the Unity and attempting to understand the distinction of the Persons; the other beginning with the distinction of Persons and attempting to understand the Unity.

Rahner's own approach will be considered shortly. First it should be noted that this divergence in approach is not confined to the Greeks and Latins, but continues to the present day. Donald Baillie, commenting on Trinitarian thought in the first half of this century, notes two trends, one tending in its extreme form towards modalism, the other tending towards tritheism "because of its use of the 'social' analogy associated with the Cappadocian Fathers of the fourth century".<sup>1</sup> The outstanding example of the first trend cited by Baillie is Barth with his preference for 'modes of Being' in the Godhead rather than 'persons', but it is the other trend which is of interest here, and in particular Baillie's criticism of the 'social' view of Trinity. This position was exemplified for Baillie by Leonard Hodgson, whose Croall lectures on the Trinity had been delivered only five years previously. Hodgson suggested that the notion of 'arithmetical, simple unity' was inappropriate for the unity of God and considered instead the unity of the thinking, feeling, willing human self.<sup>2</sup> Arguing that the "seat" of organic unity is not to be found in any one of its constituent elements, or in some further entity of the same order of being"<sup>3</sup>, but in the "unifying activity which unifies

---

<sup>1</sup> Donald Baillie, God was in Christ, (London, Faber and Faber 1955), p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Hodgson, The Doctrine of the Trinity (London, Nisbet 1943), p. 85

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

the component elements"<sup>1</sup>, he proceeded to apply this model to the unity of God, "a dynamic unity actively unifying in one Divine Life the lives of the three Divine persons".<sup>2</sup> Baillie's criticism of the concept of 'social' unity represented by Hodgson is that:

If we regard the three personae of the Trinity as quite distinct persons or personalities in the full modern sense, we seem to imply that they are parts of God, and it is difficult to remedy this by going on to speak of their being united in the highest conceivable kind of unity. If they are three distinct Persons, are they limited by each other so that they are finite Persons? Or if that is rejected as intolerable, and it is maintained that each has the attribute of infinity, is it not very difficult to think of three infinite Beings of the same essence, co-existing with each other as distinct entities? Yet I do not see how the interpretation in question can avoid that difficulty".<sup>3</sup>

Baillie's criticism is powerful. Given the initial assumption that the three persons of the Trinity are to be interpreted by analogy with 'personalities', there seems no way of avoiding tritheism. For the purposes of this discussion the 'social' concept of Trinity would provide no answer to the problem of particularity without individuality. The precise question faced here is how three persons in relation can avoid also being three individuals. From the perspective afforded by the foregoing analysis, it can be seen that Hodgson's analogy could not provide the answer, for he seeks in the unity of the individual self an analogy for the unity of a society of persons.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, as

---

<sup>1</sup>Leonard Hodgson, The Doctrine of the Trinity (London, Nisbet 1943) p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>D. Baillie op. cit. p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>A. C. Welch makes this point in his critique of Hodgson's thought: "The idea of an internally constitutive unity is not unreasonable when the constituents are thinking, willing and feeling. Its usefulness to Hodgson's case depends upon some further demonstration that personalities are of such a nature as to be capable of being comprehended into, or of comprising a unity of intensity". The Trinity in Contemporary Theology (London, SCM 1953). p. 255.

has been shown above, in a society of human persons the separateness of the persons is not overcome by their relatedness to each other. A conception of the Trinity based on the model of a human society of persons would not escape Baillie's criticism of tritheism.

Karl Rahner, though by no means adopting a 'social' analogy for the Trinity, is concerned to recognise the real distinctions between Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and believes that his method offers a new approach to the problem of the connection between the oneness and threeness of God.<sup>1</sup> He takes the way of the Greek Fathers in starting from "the self revelation of God (the Father) as given in salvation history, as mediated by the Word in the Spirit". His basic thesis is that "these distinctions of 'God for us' are also those of 'God in Himself'".<sup>2</sup> In the technical language of the Trinitarian debate this thesis is expressed as follows: "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity".<sup>3</sup> If our conception of the one God is derived from his self-communication rather than from some notion of unity conceived elsewhere, then we have to speak of the "unity of three divine persons, of the unity of the Father, the Son and the Spirit, and not merely of the unicity of the divinity". He declares that he is considering the problem of the One God rather than the One Divinity, and therefore "we are from the start with the Father, the unoriginate origin of the Son and the Spirit".<sup>4</sup> The meaning of the unity of God for Rahner is to be given only by an investigation of the relationships between Father, Son and Spirit as they are

---

<sup>1</sup>The Trinity p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 46.



communicated in creation and redemption.

If, however, we look for a fresh interpretation of the concept of unity in the light of the interpersonal relationships characterising the 'economic' Trinity, we are disappointed. Joseph Bracken, in a stimulating article on contemporary Catholic views on the Trinity, notes that "even though his understanding of the economic Trinity clearly reflects a heightened awareness of the strictly interpersonal relationships between God and man, Rahner hesitates to use the same interpersonal categories in his doctrine of the immanent Trinity".<sup>1</sup> Instead, he continually questions the use of the term 'person' to refer to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, preferring "distinct manner of subsisting".<sup>2</sup> His main difficulty with the term 'person' is that:

.... when today we speak of person in the plural, we think almost necessarily, because of the modern meaning of the word, of several spiritual centres of activity, of several subjectivities and liberties. But there are not three of these in God - not only because in God there is only one essence, hence one absolute self-presence, but also because there is only one self-utterance of the Father, the Logos. The Logos is not the one who utters but the one who is uttered. And there is properly no mutual love between Father and Son, for this would presuppose two acts.<sup>3</sup>

Thus for Rahner there can be no I-Thou relation within the Trinity.<sup>4</sup>

But why precisely does he reject the notion of a plurality of persons in the Trinity? It is because in God there is only one essence, hence one

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph A. Bracken, "The Holy Trinity as a Community of Divine Persons: Part II, Person and Nature in the Doctrine of God" Heythrop Journal vol. XV 1974, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> The Trinity p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> cf., Ibid. p. 76, n. 30 "Hence within the Trinity there is no reciprocal 'Thou'. The Son is the Father's self utterance which should not in its turn be conceived as 'uttering' and the Spirit is the 'gift' which does not give in its turn".

absolute self-presence". Three 'persons' for Rahner would mean three separate subjectivities, three consciousnesses, with the attendant danger of "massive tritheism".<sup>1</sup>

It appears that Rahner hesitates to revise the concept of unity to allow for a community of persons, and instead recasts the concept of 'person' as 'distinct manner of subsisting'. Rahner himself admits that the "concepts of essence or substance are not simply irreplaceable". Their replacement by "better concepts" is "hardly conceivable", yet "it is possible that, in another conceptual framework .... a few aspects may come out more clearly than hitherto". Such concepts, he suggests, would be "less static, more ontological, referring more to a spiritual than to a thing - like reality".<sup>2</sup> Bracken comments on this point that Rahner is "understandably cautious about tampering with such a fundamental philosophical concept, unless an entirely new metaphysical frame of reference could be put forward which would justify such a dramatic shift in perspective".<sup>3</sup> Yet it seems, declares Bracken, that by holding to an older concept of 'essence' or 'substance', and by assuming that 'person' means 'separate self-consciousness' Rahner may well be "at cross purposes with himself":

For, on the one hand he is anxious to ground belief in the Trinity in the actual experience of Father, Son and Spirit within Christian Life and worship; and, on the other hand, he is openly distrustful of the 'tritheistic' overtones of that same day-to-day experience of the Trinity and seeks to remedy this defect by coining a new technical phrase, 'distinct manner of subsisting', to substitute for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 42. cf., p. 75f.

<sup>2</sup> The Trinity p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> op. cit. Part II p. 269.

traditional word, 'person'. By this switch in terminology, however, Rahner seems implicitly to reaffirm what he ostensibly wished to change in virtue of his book; namely, the presumably too strong emphasis on God as one rather than as genuinely tripersonal in Christian life and worship.<sup>1</sup>

This is not to take away from the strength of Rahner's work. Rather it is to suggest that if he had been able to follow through the implications of his own method even when the practically unchangeable concepts of essence or substance were challenged, he would have sought a revision of the concept of unity in terms of the interpersonal character of Father, Son and Spirit as they are experienced in the life and worship of the Church.

Bracken himself tentatively suggests a "new conceptual framework", which accords closely with the concept of persons-in-relation presented above. He notes the attempt by Hodgson to find a new perspective on unity-in-Trinity, but that the analogy of the internal unity of an individual self was not a suitable model for a society of persons.<sup>2</sup> He further notes a recent attempt by William Hasker to consider again the appropriateness of the social analogy for the doctrine of the Trinity. Hasker's basic thesis is that "there is in God a Father, a Son and a Spirit, who mutually love and commune - that is who enjoy personal relationships - with each other. Each Person is to each other Person as an 'I' to a 'Thou'".<sup>3</sup> As to the ground of unity, Hasker analyses the distinction between 'person' and 'nature' and concludes, "the nature is that in virtue of which the self is able to have experiences of various kinds; it is the real capacity or the real potentiality for

---

<sup>1</sup> op. cit. p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Part I p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> William Hasker, "Tri-Unity", Journal of Religion vol. 50 1970, p. 5.



having such experiences".<sup>1</sup> 'Person' is

"the self existing as the possessor of its nature and by it as the subject of its experiences, experiences which are not the self but which are experiences of the self and which by their character serve to characterise the otherwise unknowable nature by which they are made possible".<sup>2</sup>

Using this model for the Trinity, he declares that

"the one individual and indivisible Nature of God is possessed by three Subjects, each of whom is really distinct from the other two and is the Subject of his own distinct experiences in the unity of the one divine nature and life".<sup>3</sup>

Bracken quotes these passages and comments that Hasker's analysis of 'nature' was exclusively in terms of its function as the source of unity for an individual human being, not for a society of persons. How can three persons share one nature?<sup>4</sup> Bracken's own approach to the unity of Persons in the Trinity is not based, as Hodgson's and Hasker's, on the unity of the individual. Rather, he redefines the concept of unity so that a community of three persons does not contradict it but constitutes it. The question of the unity of God and the question of the distinctness of the Persons are brought together by understanding unity precisely in terms of the mutual love of the three Persons. The "essence" or "ontological unity" of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one God "would be grounded in the single act of infinite being whereby they are a community of three persons".<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>Bracken, "The Trinity", Part I, p. 168.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. Part II, p. 259.

Belief in the Trinity demands that the three divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, exist as one God, not three Gods. Yet one is not thereby committed to an understanding of their ontological tri-unity as reductively the unity of physical substance. Their unity as one God might also be the unity of a community. In this case, the name 'God' would be strictly speaking a common or, better, a communitarian term which is applied first of all to the individual persons as members of that same community.<sup>1</sup>

Is there an answer here to the guiding problem for this section, namely, the possibility of personal particularity, or distinctness, without being individualised? Bracken himself asks the question, "If the divine persons are God only in virtue of their unity as a community, then what are they as individual persons, apart from their reality as a community?" The answer to this query:

... would seem to lie in the further proposition that to be a divine person is to be ipso facto a member of the divine community. 'Person' and 'community', at least within the divine being, are thus strictly correlative terms to express different aspects of the same unique reality: the persons together are the community and the community has no reality apart from the persons. Without these divine persons the community would not exist. But likewise without their life together in community the persons would not exist in relation to one another and thus be distinguished as individual persons. It is therefore a false question to ask what the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in themselves, apart from their reality as a community.<sup>2</sup>

That Bracken can declare the question of the individuality of the divine persons a false question leads us to inquire into the assumptions supporting his position. He himself does not present the concept of unity-in-community as an undefended doctrine, but declares that it depends for its coherence on an "antecedent philosophical hypothesis that the unity of a community is a genuine ontological unity

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Part II, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> "The Trinity", Part I, p. 179.

on a higher level of being than that of an individual substance".<sup>1</sup> From a prior review of the attempts of various twentieth-century philosophers and sociologists to define the reality of human community, he makes clear his own understanding of the "social nature of man".<sup>2</sup> He develops a "new social ontology" in which "the first category of being should not be substance but ... persons-in-community", which he defines as:

the free union of self-sufficient individuals within a collectivity which exists in and through themselves as a group but also <sup>3</sup>over and above themselves as individual persons.

Having established his ontological model he then uses it to "offer a preliminary reinterpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity". His declared purpose is to establish his hypothesis as "at least plausible, i.e. free from internal contradiction".<sup>4</sup> He then finds that it has "unexpected strength and flexibility for the analogical understanding of the distinction of persons within the Godhead".<sup>5</sup>

Bracken's arguments have been considered at some length, because his position is close to the one presented here. But there is a crucial difference in method. Bracken analyses the social character of man and develops a model of persons-in-community. The Trinity is then used as an example of the theory. In this thesis the existential analysis has shown if man is considered without reference to an extra-human reality, the concept of persons-in-community is pervaded throughout

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 171.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 179.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 169.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. Part II, p. 270.



by the contradictory fact of separate individuality. The paradox of presence-in-absence suggests that 'human' persons, considered on their own, cannot be free from their individual 'natures' and hence their separateness. If this is true, then the community relations of 'human' persons cannot be used as an analogy for a community of divine persons who are free from individual separateness. The doctrine of the Trinity is not under consideration in this chapter as an example of persons-in-community but as the possible ultimate resource for personhood, the resource in which there is pure presence without absence, where persons are themselves without in any way being individuals. The relevance of the Trinity for man will be considered in the final section of the chapter, but as a preliminary comment it would seem that 'human' personhood considered in itself is ultimately a contradiction; and that a personhood in which there is hope for 'pure' presence is a divine-human personhood.

This discussion has indicated that in at least one contemporary treatment of the Trinity, the concept of personhood without individuality is defended as being free from internal contradiction. The further vital question of whether this concept, in addition to being internally coherent, also refers in reality to a Trinity of Persons in Unity cannot be considered here. An extensive analysis of both the patristic and Biblical material would be required to determine whether this position reflected any of the strands in the Christian tradition. Sufficient has been said here to indicate a compatibility between the philosophical concept of persons-in-relation and some interpretations of the problem of unity in the Trinity.

What relevance does a discussion on the Trinity have for the question of being oneself? The answer is given in an impassioned

cry from Ranner;

The isolation of the treatise of the Trinity has to be wrong. There must be a connection between Trinity and man. The Trinity is a mystery of salvation otherwise it would never have been revealed.<sup>1</sup>

With this thought in mind, attention is turned to Christology and to the second question isolated above, can persons be embodied without necessarily being individualised by the body?

#### Embodiedness without Individuality; the Doctrine of the Incarnation

Contrary to Bracken's argument it seems that the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be understood by analogy with human persons-in-community. The existential analysis using Heidegger and Buber has indicated that personhood in man is expressed paradoxically as presence-in-absence, and such presence seems inappropriate as a model for personhood in God.

Yet this position leaves the problem of the relevance of the Trinity for man. If the Trinity cannot be understood by analogy with human personhood, then neither, it seems, can human personhood be understood by analogy with the Trinity. It is one matter to show the coherence of the concept of three divine Persons who are themselves purely in relation to each other, but how can this be relevant to man, who, it appears, is inevitably individualised by his body? As was noted in Chapter IV, the relation of persons and the body presents a dilemma: are only bodiless beings persons, or are only bodies persons? If the former, personhood cannot be attributed to man; if the latter, personhood cannot be attributed to God.<sup>2</sup> Now this dilemma, in which man and God are divided, is generated by the assumption that beings are individualised by their bodies, or 'natures'. John Zizioulas' solution to this dilemma should

---

<sup>1</sup>The Trinity, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>cf. above, p. 175.

be recalled from the last chapter. His conclusion was that the only way out of the dilemma was to admit the possibility of a particularity which was not determined by the body, and that even when it is determined by a body (as in the case of man), the person is particularly itself only because it is unique and indispensable in the context of communion.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the presence of persons would not be established on the basis of a given 'nature' compelling them to be 'there', but on the basis of love and freedom.

There is here a radical implication for the distinction between God and man. If both 'human' and 'divine' persons could be identified only in communion, and not on the basis of a given 'nature', what is it that would distinguish God and man? The answer given by Zizioulas himself is that the only difference is that man is created whereas God is not, and that man would be himself in communion with God.<sup>2</sup> This would be so only if the self was not also identified and isolated as an individual body. How embodied persons could be free is of course the pressing problem of this section, and indeed of much of the thesis. The conclusion of the preceding chapters has been that from within his own resources man has no way of overcoming the individualisation of the body. The suggestion was made at the end of Chapter IV that the concept of God was implicit in the idea of personhood, for God as 'pure' presence was an ultimate hope for persons trapped in the presence-in-absence paradox. The difficulties with this suggestion concerns the possibility of any connection between Persons-in-Trinity and embodied persons. What possible connection can there be between God and man, that could enable

---

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 415, note 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 434. cf. Gregory of Nyssa. On the Formation of Man, Chapter 16:

Wherein, then, lies the distinction between the Divine and that which resembles it? In this: that the one is



embodied persons to be free? John Zizioulas' own answer, at the end of his paper on personhood, is to understand Christ as the person in whom "the division of natures (divine and human or created) becomes difference".<sup>1</sup> Rather than thinking of the 'divine' and 'human' natures of Christ "as though they were something ultimate or self-existent", he begins with the person of Christ who is himself in "the filial relationship between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit in the Trinity". Thus, the particular uniqueness of Christ as the second person of the Trinity, and as Jesus of Nazareth is established by the same relationship.<sup>2</sup> With this schema, Zizioulas hopes "to avoid the dilemma 'divine or human person' as well as the curious composition 'divine and human person'". For:

... 'human person' and 'divine person' cannot in this case be placed in apposition as though they were two parallel 'entities' of some kind: the dilemma 'divine or human person' as well as the composite 'divine and human person' disappear in Christ by virtue of the fact that the one and the same 'schesis' [i.e. relation] is constitutive of Christ's being, both with regard to his humanity and with regard to his divinity".

Zizioulas' Trinitarian interpretation of Christ as man would seem to imply that he was not himself as an individual at all, but that his identity as the embodied person Jesus of Nazareth was given solely by his relation to the Father. His concrete particularity as the embodied Jesus is not denied by this scheme; without being embodied he is not man at all. It

---

uncreated and the other exists through creation".

Quoted by V. Lossky. Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church. (London, James Clarke, 1957), p. 119.

<sup>1</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity", p. 415, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 436. cf. W. Pannenberg's claim that Jesus identified himself only as he pointed away from himself to the Father, and that "the deity of Jesus himself, as that of the 'son', is based precisely on Jesus' holding fast to the difference between God the Father and himself". Theology and the Kingdom of God. (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1969) p. 134.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

is rather that Christ is not individualised by his human 'nature';

instead:

... human nature in Christ recovers its ekstatic movement towards God and thus it overcomes its individualisation. In this sense creaturehood becomes a 'new creation' in Christ...

The idea here seems to be that Christ the person whose identity was given solely in relation to the Father, was free to "recapitulate" and "refer back" scattered 'nature' to its Creator in a way which restored the wholeness of man's 'nature'. "Had Christ been another 'individual' among us, this catholicity of nature would not have been realised".<sup>2</sup>

The major difficulty with this notion, that the identity of Christ is established solely by the relation of sonship to the Father, is that the concrete individuality of Jesus is denied, in favour of a particularity-in-relation. Is this not a denial of the full 'manness' of Jesus? If his identity as a person was established in the Trinitarian relationship, was he not also identifiable as an individual with a particular personality, set within a particular socio-political context? How can the person of Christ be embodied without necessarily being individualised, i.e. confined by the boundaries of the body, boundaries which culminate in death?

John Zizioulas is himself fully aware of these criticisms<sup>3</sup> and argues that the embodiedness of Christ as man and the embodiedness of men, must be interpreted ecclesiologically, and pneumatologically.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. p. 435. For the relation of the person of Christ to the body as one of freedom rather than necessity cf. Athanasius De Incarnatione translated R. W. Thomson (Oxford University Press 1971), p. 137.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. cf. J. Zizioulas "Vérité et Communion", Irenikon 1977 no. 4, pp. 492ff. where these ideas are expanded somewhat.

<sup>3</sup>"Human Capacity and Human Incapacity". p. 437. cf. "Vérité et Communion", p. 493.

This is not the place to consider at length what would, in effect, amount to a full dogmatic theology, nor indeed can alternative Christologies be considered. The purpose of this section, and indeed of the chapter, is simply to respond to the claim, at the end of Chapter IV, that the concept of God is implicit in the concept of persons-in-relation as developed above. From that analysis, questions have arisen, not the least of which is the relation of person to body. All that can be achieved here is to outline some requirements which a Christology would have to meet if it were to be consistent with the view of personhood explored. Zizioulas' Christology at least in the brief fragments quoted here, only highlights one of the problems to be faced by theology, as indeed it is one of the outstanding problems facing any attempt to concretise the idea of persons-in-relation.

#### Outstanding Questions relating to a Christological Anthropology

The preceding sections of this chapter have been concerned with two questions identified above as crucial for the coherence of a relational selfhood, viz. Can persons be particularised without being individualised? ; and, Can persons be embodied without being individualised?<sup>1</sup> It has been argued that particularity without individuality is internally coherent with regard to the Trinity, and that embodiedness without individuality is a Christological possibility. If a Christological anthropology is to be constructed on the basis of these conclusions, then the following are some of the problems to be faced, concerning the ontological relevance of Christ for man.

##### 1). The relation of person to 'nature'

In this thesis, the embodiedness of persons has been presented as a paradox. The stance has been that the body is an

---

<sup>1</sup> see above, p. 192.



inseparable aspect of the human person, the concrete 'mode of existence' of each unique person, made unique by communion with other persons. The paradox arises because each body, as an isolated unit of 'human nature', is also the basis of a unique identity formed by separation from others. If this paradox is to be resolved Christologically, it would seem that a revision of the concept of 'nature' is required, so that the fragmentation of man's 'nature' is overcome in the person of Christ. A 'de-individualising' of the body of Christ is necessary, so that his embodiedness is affirmed without thereby identifying him as an individual 'nature'.<sup>1</sup> In the preceding section it was noted that Bracken attempts to qualify the concept of 'nature' in God by the concept of communion-of-persons. The 'nature' of God in this understanding is not divided into three separate 'natures', neither is it a fourth entity over against the Being of the three persons. For a Christological anthropology to be the ontological ground of the view of self outlined in this thesis, the attempt must be made to conceive of the 'nature' of man along the lines Bracken uses with reference to the Trinity; so that man's 'nature' does not individualise him but is the embodied 'mode of existence' of persons who are themselves in relation.

## 2). Christ as Representative Man

If Christology is relevant to anthropology, some view of Christ as Representative man is necessary. If Christ as an individual overcame death, that event has no significance for others, apart from a legalistic functional one. His resurrection would be a private resurrection in the midst of a decaying world and a dying humanity.

---

<sup>1</sup>cf. J. Zizioulas who coins the phrase "de-individualising of Christ", "Vérité et Communion", p. 495. cf. V. Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, pp. 118ff; In the Image and Likeness of God, (Oxford, Mowbray, 1975), pp. 106ff.

In talking of representation, care must be taken here to avoid the pitfalls of some Western attempts to interpret Christ as Representative man. Atonement theory in Western thought views Christ as Representative man but in so doing either ignores the freedom of persons or the power of death. The substitutionary model in which Christ dies in our place makes the existence of each person redundant; and an 'imitative' model, whereby following Christ's example leads to salvation, in no way affects and reverses our passage towards death. The task of an adequate Christology is therefore to find a model of Christ as Representative man in which the embodied uniqueness of each person is preserved. In other words, an attempt must be made to conceive of an inclusive Christology, i.e. one which affects man rather than some men, without usurping the freedom of persons.

### 3). The particularity of Jesus Christ in the Church

Some way of bridging the gap in space and time between the particularity of the embodied Christ and the particularity of other persons must be found. It is possible that the Pauline doctrine of the Church as the body of Christ can be understood ontologically rather than analogically, so that the identity of persons in the Church, and the identity of the person of Christ are established in an identical way. Clearly, if Jesus is identified as himself by his individual separateness, then he, as one individual, could not be identical with other individuals, i.e. if Jesus was identified by his spatio-temporal presence, then it makes no sense to say that others could 'be' him.

One possibility is to bridge the distance between Christ and ourselves pneumatologically. However, as John Zizioulas comments, introducing the Holy Spirit as a Deus ex machina in order to connect an individual who lived in Palestine for thirty years with us here and now,



does not convince either existentially or ontologically.<sup>1</sup> On this model the Spirit is an agent of communication, assisting in overcoming the distance between Christ and ourselves. Zizioulas identifies another Christological model, in which the Spirit has an ontological function, with respect to the person of Christ and of ourselves:

Ici le Saint-Esprit n'est pas quelqu'un qui nous assiste en comblant la distance entre le Christ et nous-mêmes, mais il est la personne de la Trinité qui réalise actuellement dans l'histoire ce que nous appelons le Christ, cette entité absolument personnelle et relationnelle de notre Sauveur. En ce cas notre Christologie est conditionnée essentiellement - et non seulement secondairement, comme dans le premier cas - par la pneumatologie.<sup>2</sup>

In this interpretation, the division between the 'one' and the 'many' in the body of Christ disappears, for Christ is 'one' as the unique body Jesus of Nazareth, as he relates to the Father, but he is also 'many' in that the same relation

... becomes now the constitutive element - the hypostases - of all those whose particularity and uniqueness and therefore ultimate being are constituted through the same filial relationship which constitutes Christ's being. The biblical notion of the 'body of Christ' acquires [in] this way its ontological significance in all the variations in which this notion appears in the Bible: the anthropological (Adam - first<sup>3</sup> and last), eschatological, ecclesiological, eucharistic etc.

This concept has much to commend it, and is a useful starting point in tackling the problem of how persons can be freed from bondage to their spatio-temporal boundaries. If Christ, pneumatologically, is himself both as 'one' and as 'many', then the resurrection cannot be interpreted

---

<sup>1</sup>"Vérité et Communion", p. 495, note 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 497. For commentaries on the pneumatological approach to Christology characteristic of Eastern Orthodox theology, cf. V. Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, pp. 156ff; In the Image and Likeness of God, pp. 104ff.

<sup>3</sup>J. Zizioulas, "Human Capacity and Human Incapacity". p. 438.



primarily as an event involving the historical Jesus Christ and relevant to the Church only as a secondary matter. Rather, the resurrection, which expresses the embodied transcendence of the person beyond the boundaries of space and time, must refer both to the one body, Jesus Christ, and the body of persons-in-communion, the Church.

At least one difficulty remains with this concept as presented; viz. the temporal dimension is ignored. Indeed, Zizioulas declares:

Le Saint-Esprit en actualisant l'événement Christ dans l'histoire, réalise en même temps Son existence personnelle comme corps ou communauté. Le Christ n'existe pas d'abord comme Vérité et ensuite comme communion; Il est les deux simultanément. Toute distance entre la christologie et l'ecclésiologie disparaît dans l'Esprit.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of what has been said above concerning the bondage of persons to a particular 'time',<sup>2</sup> the concept of the simultaneity of the existence of the embodied Jesus and the body of the Church, as suggested by Zizioulas, is problematical. And yet this problem of the 'fixity' of persons in the past must be faced as a problem for Christology, and some way must be found to express the transcendence of the person of Jesus beyond first century Palestine, and so from there to express the transcendence of all persons beyond their 'own' time and space. From the analysis of Buber, it has been made clear that such a freedom of persons is not found by 'abolishing' time in the timeless 'moment' of encounter. The difference between one person's 'time' and another's must not be denied - for it is a particular and unique space and time which enables persons to be embodied at all. But 'time', instead of being a barrier to communion between persons, must be shown to allow free communion to take place. For a Christology to offer such freedom to

---

<sup>1</sup>"Vérité et Communion", p. 497.

<sup>2</sup>cf. above, pp. 189ff.

persons from the limitations of space and time, an eschatological perspective is required, for clearly persons are not yet free from their boundaries.

4). Freedom anticipated in the sacraments

One final question must be asked which is of central significance for a Christology compatible with the view of personhood explored. If Christology is to be concerned not simply with the relationship of God and man in one 'individual', but with every person, how can the freedom of person vis a vis his 'nature' be actualised existentially? The incapacity of man to overcome the spatio-temporal limitations of his body has been emphasised; there can therefore be no suggestion of transcendence of the self by will-power, or by following an ethical code. One approach to the question of the actualising of freedom from space and time is to find ontological significance in the sacraments rather than simply a symbolic value, i.e. in these acts of the Church, space and time are transformed in anticipation of the eschaton, so that these dimensions are bearers of personal communion instead of dividing persons. Whether or not the Pauline understanding of the sacraments, or the thoughts of the Church Fathers, can bear such an ontological interpretation cannot be investigated here. Certainly, some contemporary Protestant theologians appear to view them in such a way. Thus T. F. Torrance in Space, Time and Resurrection, understands baptism and eucharist as spanning the 'old' and 'new ages'. On the one hand, "visible, tangible and corruptible elements" of this creation, water, bread and wine are used. But on the other, these become the bearers of the new creation in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Space, Time and Resurrection. (Edinburgh, the Handsel Press, 1976), p. 148.

The two Sacraments of the Gospel enshrine together the essential 'moments' of our participation in the new creation, while we are still implicated in the space and time of this passing world. Baptism is the Sacrament of our once and for all participation in Christ, ... The Eucharist is the Sacrament of our continuous participation in Christ ... which is regularly to be repeated, until Christ comes again. They thus express in their togetherness the core of the ontological and eschatological relation which we have within the crucified, risen and ascended Lord.<sup>1</sup>

Such a sacramental view is an attempt to avoid a divorce between this spatio-temporal world, characterised by decay and death, and another world of the 'new creation', a world in which the freedom of persons is not contradicted by the body but enabled by it. Whether or not the sacraments can meet the requirement cannot be settled here. Nevertheless, the point remains that if Christology is to be the ground of anthropology, then some way must be found of concretising the freedom of Christ, as Representative man, within our paradoxical existence. From the above remarks it may appear that, by focusing on the sacraments, this Christological model reduces personal Being in Christ to the 'moments' of baptism and eucharist, in a way reminiscent of Buber's 'moment' of encounter. This problem, however, need not be insuperable. There remains the possibility that the reflection of the transformation of space and time, expressed by the sacraments, is also to be found in the existence of persons. In the concluding pages of the thesis, it will be suggested that in the tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet' portrayed by the sacraments, there is a vision of Christian existence.

Before that point, a final comment must be made on the

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. p. 150. cf. Jurgen Moltmann, The Church in the Power of the Spirit. (London, SCM, 1977, pp. 236ff; pp. 252ff. Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, (London, SCM, 1952), vol.1, pp. 310ff.



purpose of this section. It has not been the intention to provide answers to the paradoxes explored earlier, but rather to raise more problems, which have to be faced by Christology if it is to be relevant to these paradoxes. As with the preceding section on the Trinity it should not be thought that Christology is here subjected to the philosophical concept of persons-in-relation as if it were the ultimate criterion of truth. Rather, the reverse holds. If Christology is to be relevant to the paradoxes of existence, it is our concepts of 'self' and 'man' which need revision in the light of Christ as Representative man. The clear conclusion of the comparison of Heidegger and Buber has been that the 'self', defined without any relation to an extra-human reality, is left either to a relation with itself, or with creation. The result of either is death. Christology, if it is to provide the ontological ground for another view of man, must surely show that man is not himself towards death, but towards life. In summary, if Christ is to be that life, a Christology is needed which is inclusive for man without usurping the freedom of each person to be himself. Secondly, if the person of Christ is to be interpreted ecclesiologically as communion, then a view of the Church is needed which, again without denying freedom of persons, offers an inclusive hope to all persons, indeed a hope that the whole creation of space and time itself "will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God". (Rom. 8:21).

## CONCLUSION

### ESCHATOLOGICAL EXISTENCE

In the last five chapters there has been an exploration of the polarities of love and death. Heidegger's stoical isolation in the face of decaying time, and Buber's timeless moment of eternity in the face of the other, which began as alternatives, have both emerged as dimensions of man without which one is not faithful to the paradox of existence. The problem throughout this study has been how to hold together love and death without denying the reality of either. It has been argued that the attempt to reconcile the two leads ultimately to the incorporation of death in the definition of man, so that man-without-death would not be truly man at all, but some sort of super-man. Such an acceptance of death means that, even if a distinction is made between empirical man, man 'as he appears', and 'true' man, both would be defined by death. If, on the other hand, it was argued that 'true' man is man without death, what are we to make of empirical man who is a part of a dying world. Is man 'as he appears' not man at all?

Buber's vision was that empirical man is not wholly defined as a being who dies, for a dimension of man 'as he appears' is his capacity to love, and love cannot be accommodated with death. For Buber, in the midst of the world of necessity and death is another world of freedom disclosed in the momentary meeting of 'I' and 'Thou'. The criticism of Buber was that he could not come to terms with facticity, with death, for the glimpses of eternity in the moment of encounter were presented as though they were inherent in creation here

and now, if only we had eyes to see and ears to hear.

It was suggested that an eschatological perspective might overcome this deficiency in Buber's thought. But have the Christological issues sketched in the last chapter taken us any further, for has not the new identity in Christ been confined to the 'moments' of baptism and eucharist? Both Heidegger and Buber in different ways were searching for authentic existence, for a way of identifying oneself which corresponded to and reflected the world as they believed it to be. Is there no way in which an eschatological identity can be expressed other than in the sacramental life of the Church? If there is, it should not be imagined that somehow in the midst of a creation gripped by facticity some persons, by following a programme for authentic existence, can achieve freedom from the strictures of space and time. The reality of death surely puts an end to any suggestion that freedom could be achieved by following a code of behaviour. According to the Christological points raised in the last chapter, freedom must come only in adopting a new identity in Christ, in whom space and time have been transformed in anticipation of the coming glory of God.

How then could eschatological existence be actualised? Perhaps by bringing a hope in the transforming creativity of God to bear on the present and the past, of which we too will soon be part. This hope is that in the power of God, for whom the past is as much a reality as present and future, persons and events in the past need not be trapped by their own space and time but can be related to an eschatological future. Such a hope for the transformation of the past is expressed well by the Scottish poet, Edwin Muir:



But he will come again, it's said, though not  
 Unwanted and unsummoned; for all things,  
 Beasts of the field, and woods, and rocks, and seas,  
 And all mankind from end to end of the earth  
 Will call him with one voice. In our own time,  
 Some say, or at a time when time is ripe.  
 Then he will come, Christ the uncrucified,  
 Christ the discrucified, his death undone,  
 His agony unmade, his cross dismantled--  
 Glad to be so--and the tormented wood  
 Will cure its hurt and grow into a tree  
 In a green springing corner of young Eden,  
 And Judas damned take his long journey backward  
 From darkness into light and be a child  
 Beside his mother's knee, and the betrayal  
 Be quite undone, and never more be done.<sup>1</sup>

There is here a hope for a re-creation of the past, so that even Judas, that archetypal figure of damnation, would become as a child, not only forgiven but made innocent. And so we can wait with longing not only for persons in the past, but with them for the whole material creation to be released from bondage to necessity, and confinement to a particular space and time span.

Does this mean that eschatological existence can be no more than an attitude of hope and longing? Is there only a vision of glory without any concrete anticipation of it? Is there any real sense in which persons could anticipate the transformation of the past? Clearly any suggestion that the past could be altered by the will of man would be to presume for man the creative power of God, and would be a denial of our weakness and bondage to our own space and time. And yet to accept that 'what is done is done' seems to be an acknowledgement that we are ultimately defined by our own space and time. In Chapter V it was suggested that this paradox of existence could be actualised as a

---

<sup>1</sup>Edwin Muir, "The Transfiguration" in Collected Poems ,  
 (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), p. 200.

Resistance to facticity, a Refusal to be defined by it while acknowledging its reality.

With respect to the past such a resistance surely takes place when someone refuses to let the past be forgotten, whenever Bloody Sunday, or the death of Martin Luther King, the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia or the crucifixion of Christ, are remembered and recalled to the present, as a suffering testimony against complacency in the present. To be faithful to the Eschaton, such a recalling could not be a mental recollection of past events which does nothing to alter the events themselves, but in the fashion of the Lord's Supper is an anamnesis , a re-calling of the past event which is complete only in relation to the eschatological future, in a way which affects the present. In recalling these events to the present, there is a refusal to accept the world as it is portrayed by the oppressors, a refusal to rest while these events are forgotten by oppressors for whom they are an embarrassment.

Perhaps here the Christian doctrine of the forgiveness of sins is relevant, if it is viewed from an eschatological perspective. In contrast to some views of forgiveness which, tacitly conceding that the past is unchangeable understand forgiveness as a forgetting of what has happened, or a pretence that it does not matter for the present, could not forgiveness be seen as a refusal to forget, for forgetting, in Marcuse's words is also "to forgive what should not be forgiven if justice and freedom are to prevail .... To forget past suffering is to forgive the forces that caused it--without defeating these forces".<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>H. Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, p. 185.

Such a refusal to forget should not be taken as a mental process, a function of the individual, but a personal stance of remembrance in which one recognises past wrong-doing and suffering, and presents it to the righteousness of God. Forgiveness would then be a mediating of the hope that past and present are not always to be bound by facticity. Not that this activity could be the means by which the past is transformed, but that in its forgiving the Church enacts in imperfect and partial ways the complete transfiguration of creation by God for whom no one and no part of creation at any time is absent.

As far as the present is concerned, once again the key to eschatological existence seems to be to maintain a critical stance over against the world 'as it is', to refuse to resolve the tension between the 'now' and the 'not-yet'. As to how that tension is demonstrated in concrete situations, it appears that almost any action could be faithful to the eschatological vision, and almost any action could be a denial of it. One could exist ascetically, anticipating the eschatological transformation by renouncing the limitations of the body with its natural needs. In that way one resists the world 'as it is', yet such an existence could easily be a denial of the tension if it were forgotten that such ascetism is only an anticipation of the kingdom and in no way a final realisation of it; or if the renunciation of bodily needs became corrupted to the view that the body is evil.

On the other hand one's actions could portray the frailty of the human condition and yet be faithful to the vision of the Kingdom of God if one accepted the frailty not in complacency but in longing for the time when creation is transformed. It seems that an absolute position on any moral dilemma is excluded and that it is not so much one's actions but one's whole orientation which determines whether one is existing in faithfulness to the eschatological hope.



To illustrate the range of existential possibilities an example will be considered from the world of drama rather from 'real' life. In T.S. Eliot's "The Cocktail Party" two ways of expressing love are explored. Celia, who has a vision of a love taking her beyond herself, believed she had found in Edward someone to whom she could give such love. With him, time stood still. "I abandoned the future before we began, and after that I lived in a present where time was meaningless, a private world of ours, where the word 'happiness' had a different meaning, or so it seemed."<sup>1</sup> Yet when, after his wife has left him, Edward refuses to take the opportunity to gain his freedom with Celia, she feels she has betrayed her inward vision of love by supposing it could have been made real in Edward. In her distress she turns to Reilly, a psychiatrist, to ask if she can be cured of her longing for a visionary love. He assures her,

If that is what you wish, I can reconcile you to human condition, the condition to which some who have gone as far as you have succeeded in returning. They may remember the vision they have had but they cease to regret it ...<sup>2</sup>

He depicts existence in which two people become tolerant of themselves and others, and the other life will be only like a book they have once read, and lost, a dream that has faded leaving only a sad, wistfulness;

... two people who know they do not understand each other, breeding children whom they do not understand and who will never understand them.<sup>3</sup>

This is one kind of love, which Celia feels could not match her vision,

---

<sup>1</sup>T.S. Eliot, The Cocktail Party (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

but which might have been her lot with Edward. Reilly responds,

There is another way, if you have the courage.  
The first I could describe in familiar terms because you have seen it, as we all have seen it illustrated, more or less, in lives of those about us. The second is unknown, and so requires faith--the kind of faith that issues from despair. The destination cannot be described; you will know very little until you get there; you will journey blind. But the way leads towards possession of what you have sought for in the wrong place.<sup>1</sup>

The interesting point is that Eliot, far from denigrating the commonplace life in comparison with the self-sacrificing love he wishes to portray through Celia, refuses to judge them as alternatives. Thus Celia asks,

... what is my duty?

Reilly: Whichever way you choose will prescribe its own duty.

Celia: Which way is better?

Reilly: Neither way is better.

Both ways are necessary. It is also necessary to make a choice between them.<sup>2</sup>

Eliot here presents two ways of loving, the way which leads to self-sacrifice, and with Celia to a withdrawal from 'normal' secular life to a religious calling. The second way is expressed in the bustle of everyday life. Both ways are necessary for together they remind us that the kingdom of God is not here, and yet may be anticipated.

This tension between realisation and longing is evident not only in one to one relationships but in all areas of social and political life. To be faithful to the coming Kingdom of God, it appears that a resistance to two assumptions is called for; both that the ultimate

---

<sup>1</sup>Eliot, The Cocktail Party, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

realisation of freedom can be engineered by man; and the view of the ethical libertine who supposes that there is nothing we can do to bring in the Kingdom of God, so we might as well do what we like.

Perhaps it is the agony of choosing itself which is faithful or unfaithful to the eschatological vision rather than what is finally decided. The weakness of the person who is unable to take the sacrificial path may witness as much to the absence of the Kingdom of God, as much as does the person who denies his own self and lives for others. Is not the Church also to reflect this range of existential possibilities, embracing and standing in solidarity with the weakness of man, as well as being an anticipation of the glory of the coming Christ, keeping before the world the vision of the Kingdom:

It's a long way off but inside it  
 There are quite different things going on:  
 Festivals at which the poor man  
 Is king and the consumptive is  
 Healed; mirrors in which the blind look  
 At themselves and love looks at them  
 Back; and industry is for mending  
 The bent bones and the minds fractured  
 By life. It's a long way off, but to get  
 There takes no time and admission  
 Is free, if you will purge yourself  
 Of desire, and present yourself with  
 Your need only and the simple offering  
 Of your faith, green as a leaf.

R.S. Thomas, "The Kingdom"

H'm (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 34.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, Theodor W. The Jargon of Authenticity. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973.
- Anderson, Susan L. "The Substantive Center Theory versus the Bundle Theory", The Monist, vol. 61, no. 1, 1978, pp. 96-107.
- Athanasius, De Incarnatione. Translated by R. W. Thomson. Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Augustine of Hippo. The Trinity. Translated by Stephen McKenna. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963.
- Baillie, Donald. God was in Christ. London: Faber and Faber, 1955.
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von. "Martin Buber and Christianity" in The Philosophy of Martin Buber, hereafter referred to as PMB, The Library of Living Philosophers vol. XII, edited by P. A. Schilpp and M. A. Friedman. Illinois: Open Court, 1967, p. 341-360.
- Barbour, I. G. Issues in Science and Religion. London: SCM Press, 1966
- Barrett, William. Irrational Man, A Study in Existential Philosophy. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1962.
- Barth, Karl. Christ and Adam. The Scottish Journal of Theology (SJT) Occasional Papers, no. 5. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956.
- Becker, Ernest. The Denial of Death. New York: The Free Press, 1973.
- Berdyayev, Nicolas. The Beginning and the End. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Divine and the Human. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1949.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Slavery and Freedom. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1943.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit and Reality. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939.
- Bettenson, Henry. The Later Christian Fathers. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Bianchi, E. C. "Death and Transcendence in Ernest Becker", Religion in Life vol. XLVI, 1977. pp. 460-475.
- Bindley, T. H. The Oecumenical Documents of the Faith. London: Methuen, 1950.

- Bishop, D. H. "Buddhist and Western Views of the Self".  
The Eastern Buddhist, vol. II no. 2, 1969, pp. 111-123.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. Act and Being. Translated by Bernard Noble.  
London: Collins, 1962.
- Bracken, Joseph A. "The Holy Trinity as a Community of Divine Persons",  
Heythrop Journal, vol. XV, 1974, Part I pp. 166-182,  
Part II pp. 257-270.
- Bradley, F. H. Appearance and Reality. London: Oxford University Press,  
1897.
- Brown, James. Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Buber and Barth.  
New York: Collier Books, 1962.
- Brown, Norman O. Life Against Death. Connecticut: Wesleyan University  
Press, 1959.
- Buber, Martin. "Autobiographical Fragments", in PMB, pp. 3-32.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Between Man and Man. London: Fontana Library, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Eclipse of God. Translated by M. Friedman.  
New York: Harper Torchbook, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I and Thou. 2nd Edition. Translated by R. Gregor Smith.  
Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Knowledge of Man. Translated by M. Friedman.  
London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mamre, Essays in Religion. Translated by Greta Hort.  
London: Oxford University Press, 1946.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pointing the Way. Translated by M. Friedman.  
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Prophetic Faith. Translated by C. Witton-Davies.  
New York: Harper, 1949.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Replies to my Critics", in PMB, pp. 689-744.
- Bulgakov, Sergius. The Orthodox Church. London: The Centenary Press,  
1935.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. Theology of the New Testament, vol. I.  
London: SCM, 1952.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Existence and Faith. Translated by Schubert Ogden.  
London: Fontana Library, 1964.

- Daisetz, Suzuki. "Self the Unattainable". The Eastern Buddhist, new series, vol. III, no. 2, 1970, p. 3.
- Davis, Charles. Body as Spirit. The Nature of Religious Feeling. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976.
- Demske, James. Being, Man and Death. Kentucky: University Press, 1970.
- Dilworth, David A. and Silverman, Hugo J. "A Cross-cultural Approach to the De-ontological self Paradigm". The Monist, vol. 61, no. 1, 1978, pp. 82f.
- Dopfffel, Helmut. The Concept of Death in Heidegger's Being and Time. Unpublished M.Th. Thesis. Edinburgh: New College, 1976.
- Downie, R. S. and Telfer, E. Respect for Persons. London: Allen and Unwin, 1969.
- Eichrodt, Walter. Theology of the Old Testament. London: SCM Press, 1967.
- Eliot, T. S. The Cocktail Party. London: Faber and Faber, 1974.
- Flohr, Paul R. "The Road to I and Thou: An Inquiry into Buber's Transition from Mysticism to Dialogue" in Texts and Responses: Studies presented to Nahum N. Glatzer. Edited by M. A. Fishbane and P. R. Flohr, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975, pp. 201-225.
- Forsyth, James J. "Faith and Eros: Paul's Answer to Freud". Religion in Life, vol. XLVI, pp. 476-487.
- Fouyas, Methodios. The Person of Jesus Christ in the Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils. Addis Ababa: Central Printing Press, 1976.
- Friedman, Maurice. Martin Buber, The Life of Dialogue. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Worlds of Existentialism, A Critical Reader. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.
- Fromm, Erich. The Art of Loving. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975.
- Gelven, Michael. A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time. New York: Harper, 1970.
- Gundry, R. H. Soma in Biblical Theology. Society for New Testament Studies, Monograph Series, no. 29. Cambridge University Press, 1976.



- Hall, Calvin. Theories of Personality. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957.
- Hardy, E. R. (Editor). Christology of the Later Fathers. The Library of Christian Classics, vol. III. London: SCM Press, 1954.
- Harrod, Howard L. "Interpreting and Projecting: Two Elements of the self as Moral Agent". Journal of the American Academy of Religion, vol. 41, 1973, pp. 18-29.
- Hartshorne, Charles. "Time, Death and Everlasting Life", The Logic of Perfection. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1962.
- Hasker, William. "Tri-Unity" in Journal of Religion, vol. 50, 1970, pp.1-32.
- Hegel, Georg F. W. Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion. London: Kegan Paul, 1895.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Phenomenology of Mind. Translated by J. B. Baillie. New York: Macmillan, 1931.
- Heidegger, Martin. Being and Time. Translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Essence of Reasons. Translated by T. Malick. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Existence and Being. Translated by Werner Brock. London: Vision Press, 1949.
- \_\_\_\_\_ An Introduction to Metaphysics. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Yale University Press, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit, Mit einem Brief uber den Humanismus. Berne: A. Francke, 1947.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics. Translated by J. S. Churchill. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962.
- Heim, Karl. Christian Faith and Natural Science. London: SCM Press, 1953.
- Hepburn, Ronald W. Christianity and Paradox. London: C. A. Watts, 1958.
- Hick, John. Death and Eternal Life. London: Collins, 1976.
- Hocking, W. E. The Meaning of God in Human Experience. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1912.
- Hodgson, Leonard. The Doctrine of the Trinity. London: Nisbet, 1943.
- Hopper, S. R. "The 'Eclipse of God' and Existentialist Mistrust". The Eastern Buddhist new series, vol. III, no. 2, 1970, pp. 46-70.
- Hume, David. A Treatise on Human Nature, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge. Oxford University Press, 1965.

- Jenkins, David. The Contradiction of Christianity. London: SCM Press, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Glory of Man. London: SCM Press, 1967.
- Jüngel, Eberhard. Death, The Riddle and the Mystery. Edinburgh: St. Andrew's Press, 1975.
- Katz, Stephen. "Dialogue and Revelation in the Thought of Martin Buber". Religious Studies, vol. 14, March 1978, pp. 57-68.
- Kegley, Charles W. "Martin Buber's Ethics and the Problem of Norms". Religious Studies, vol. 5, 1969, pp. 181-194.
- Kelly, J. N. D. Early Christian Doctrines. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1976.
- King, Magda. Heidegger's Philosophy. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964.
- Knox, John. "Can the Self Survive the Death of its Mind?". Religious Studies, vol. 5, no. 1, 1969, pp. 85-97.
- Laing, R. D. The Divided Self. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1965.
- Langan, Thomas. The Meaning of Heidegger. London: R. and K. Paul, 1969.
- Laslett, P., Editor. The Physical Basis of Mind. London: Oxford University Press, 1957.
- Lesser, A. H. "Eastern and Western Empiricism and the 'no-self' theory", Religious Studies, vol. 15, no. 1. March 1979, p. 55-64.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. "Martin Buber and the Theory of Knowledge", in PMB, pp. 133-150.
- Lewis, H. D. The Elusive Mind. London: Allen and Unwin, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Persons and Life after Death. London: Macmillan, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Self and Immortality. London: Macmillan, 1973.
- Lossky, Vladimir. In the Image and Likeness of God. Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church. Cambridge: James Clarke, 1957.
- Lubac, Henri de. Catholicism, A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind. London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1950.
- Macmurray, John. Interpreting the Universe. London: Faber and Faber, 1933.

- Macmurray, John. Persons in Relation. London: Faber and Faber, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Self as Agent. London: Faber and Faber, 1957.
- Macquarrie, John. An Existentialist Theology. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Martin Heidegger. London: Lutterworth Press, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Studies in Christian Existentialism. London: SCM Press, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Twentieth Century Religious Thought. London: SCM Press, 1963.
- Marcel, Gabriel. "I and Thou", in PMB, pp. 41ff.
- Marcuse, Herbert. Eros and Civilisation. London: Sphere Books, 1969.
- Maritain, Jacques. The Person and the Common Good. London: Godfrey Bles, 1948.
- May, Rollo. Love and Will. London: Collins Fontana Library, 1972.
- Metz, Johannes B. Theology of the World. London: Burns and Oates, 1968.
- Moltmann, Jurgen. The Church in the Power of the Spirit. London: SCM Press, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Religion, Revolution and the Future. Translated by M. Douglas Meeks. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Theology of Hope. Translated by James W. Leitch. London: SCM Press, 1967.
- Moore, G. E. "External and Internal Relations", Philosophical Studies, London: Kegan Paul, 1922, pp. 276-309.
- Muir, Edwin. "The Transfiguration", in Collected Poems, London: Faber and Faber, 1960.
- Needham, Jacob, Editor. Being-in-the-World; Selected Papers of Ludwig Binswanger. New York: Basic Books, 1963.
- Nishitani, Keiji. "On the I-Thou Relation in Zen Buddhism". The Eastern Buddhist, new series, vol. II, no. 2, 1969, pp. 71-87.
- O'Donoghue, N. D. "Sister Death", The Furrow, vol. 29, no. 5, 1978, pp. 274-293.
- Panikkar, Raimundo. The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973.



- Pannenberg, Wolfhart. The Apostles' Creed. London: SCM Press, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Theology and the Kingdom of God. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Basic Questions in Theology. London: SCM Press, 1973, vol.III.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus, God and Man. London: SCM Press, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Person" in RGG (3rd edition) V, pp. 230-235.
- \_\_\_\_\_ What is Man? Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970.
- Peacocke, A. R. Science and the Christian Experiment. London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Pittenger, Norman. "God 'The One in Three, the Three in One'". Religion in Life, vol. XLVIII, 1979, pp. 93-100.
- Prestige, G. L. Fathers and Heretics. London: SPCK, 1968.
- Rahner, Karl. On the Theology of Death. New York: Herder and Herder, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Trinity. Translated by J. Donceel. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.
- Ramsey, I. T. Freedom and Immortality. London: SCM Press, 1960.
- Richards, Glyn. "Conceptions of the Self in Wittgenstein, Hume and Buddhism: an analysis and comparison". The Monist, vol. 61, no. 1, 1978, p. 48.
- Richardson, William J. Heidegger. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962.
- Robinson, J. A. T. The Body, A Study in Pauline Theology, Studies in Biblical Theology, 1st series, no. 5. London: SCM Press, 1952.
- Rogers, Carl. On Becoming a Person. London: Constable, 1967.
- Roszak, Theodore. The Making of a Counter-Culture. London: Faber and Faber, 1970.
- Ruddock, Ralph, Editor. Six Approaches to the Person. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.
- Ryle, Gilbert. The Concept of Mind. London: Hutchinson, 1949.
- Saint Exupéry, Antoine de. The Little Prince. Translated by Katherine Woods. London: Puffin Books, 1962.
- Sartre, Jean Paul. Existentialism and Humanism. Translated by Philip Mairet. London: Methuen, 1948.

- Sartre, Jean Paul. Being and Nothingness. Translated and introduced by Hazel Barnes. London: Methuen, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Transcendence of the Ego. Translated by Williams and Kirkpatrick, New York: Noonday Press, 1957.
- Schmitt, Richard. Martin Heidegger on Being Human. New York: Random House, 1969.
- Sellers, R. V. Two Ancient Christologies. London: SPCK, 1940.
- Skinner, B. F. Beyond Freedom and Dignity. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Science and Human Behaviour. New York: The Free Press, 1965.
- Smith, Constance I. "The Single One and the Other". Hibbert Journal, vol. XLVI, 1948, pp. 315-321.
- Sölle, Dorothee. Christ the Representative. London: SCM Press, 1967.
- Spiegelberg, Herbert. The Phenomenological Movement. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965.
- Stambaugh, Joan. "Time-Being; East and West", The Eastern Buddhist, new series, vol. IX, no. 2, 1976, pp. 107-114.
- Steffney, John. "Heidegger and Buber: Ontology and Philosophical Anthropology", Religion in Life, vol. 43, 1974, pp. 33-41.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Non-being-Being versus the Non-being of Being: Heidegger's Ontological Difference and Zen Buddhism", The Eastern Buddhist, new series, vol. X, no. 2, 1977, pp. 65-75.
- Storr, Anthony. The Integrity of Personality. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963.
- Strawson, P. F. Individuals. London: Methuen, 1964.
- Sutherland, S. R. "Ethics and Transcendence in Bonhoeffer". SJT, vol. 30, 1977, pp. 543-554.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Immortality and Resurrection". Religious Studies, vol. 3, 1967, p. 377.
- Templeton, Elizabeth. "On Undoing the Past". Unpublished paper delivered to the Society for the Study of Theology, York, 1979.
- Thomas, Heywood. "Immortality and Humanism", The Modern Churchman, new series, vol. 3, 1959, p. 33.
- Thomas, R. S. "The Kingdom" in H'm, London: Macmillan, 1972, p. 34.
- Torrance, T. F. Review of Heidegger, Being and Time in SJT, vol. XV, 1964, pp. 471-486.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Space, Time and Incarnation. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

- Torrance, T. F. Space, Time and Resurrection. Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1976.
- Vycinas, Vincent. Earth and Gods. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969.
- Waelhens, A. de. La Philosophie de Martin Heidegger.  
Bibliothèque Philosophique de Louvain, 1942.
- Wahl, Jean. "Buber and the Philosophers of Existence" in PMB, pp. 475-510.
- Walgrave, John H. Person and Society. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965.
- Walters, James W. "Martin Buber's Philosophy of Relationality and Mysticism". Encounter, vol. 39, 1978, pp. 189-201.
- Webb, C. C. J. God and Personality. London: George, Allen and Unwin, 1918.
- Welch, A. C. The Trinity in Contemporary Theology.  
London: SCM Press, 1953.
- Wheelright, Philip. "Buber's Philosophical Anthropology" in PMB, pp. 69-96.
- Williams, Daniel Day. A Theological View of Identity, the New Shape of Pastoral Theology. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969.
- Williams, J. R. "Heidegger, Death and God". Studies in Religion I, 1971-72, pp. 298-319.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Tractatus Logico Philosophicus.  
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961.
- Wolfson, H. A. The Philosophy of the Church Fathers.  
Cambridge: Massachusetts, 1970.
- Wood, Robert E. Martin Buber's Ontology; an analysis of I and Thou.  
Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969.
- Zernov, Nicolas. Eastern Christendom. London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1961.
- Zizioulas, John. "Human Capacity and Human Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood", SJT, vol. 28, 1975, pp. 401-448.
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Vérité et Communion" in Irenikon, no. 4, 1977, pp. 492ff.